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VOLUME XXIX, 1959–60

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EDITOR

DOUGLAS GRANT

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THE TOPICALITY OF *LITTLE DORRIT*

John Butt

The prestige of Dickens' novels is apt to make us forget that he was also a journalist, and that he never abandoned the profession. He started work as a newspaper reporter in 1832; from 1836 to 1839 he edited a monthly periodical for the publisher Richard Bentley; in 1840 he began his own weekly periodical, *Master Humphrey's Clock*; in 1846 he founded the *Daily News*, and edited the first seventeen issues; and in 1850 he founded a weekly magazine which, with a change of title, he was to edit until his death. A journalist's interest in the events of the day was part of his constitution, and it is not surprising that this interest affects his novels in varying degrees.

None of the novels is entirely free from reflection upon the issues of the day, though towards the end of his career—in *Great Expectations* and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*—he seemed to be disengaging himself from direct reflection. It is in the novels immediately following *David Copperfield* that topicalities are most numerous. These are *Bleak House*, *Hard Times*, and *Little Dorrit*, and except for brief intervals they occupied him from March 1852 to June 1857. These three novels are all alike in one important respect: they all show Dickens attempting to control, in the interest of a homogeneous theme, a tendency to discursiveness of comment. As late as *David Copperfield* he can still be seen taking such opportunities as his story gives him to discuss the humane treatment of lunatics (in Mr. Dick), the redemption of prostitutes and the possibility of their beginning a new life in Australia (in Martha Endell and Little Em'ly), and the pampering of prisoners at Pentonville (in the behaviour of Littimer and Uriah Heep in the final number); and it would tax the ingenuity of criticism to see what connection these topics have with the central theme of *David Copperfield*, the education of the undisciplined heart. In each of the following novels, however, Dickens made a great and largely successful effort to integrate the diversity of

detail into a single view of society; for though they are all concerned with the social questions of the day, there is an even more important sense in which each is concerned with what goes on in the individual heart. In *Hard Times*, the circus clown's daughter, Sissy Jupe, is described in the number-plans as the "Power of Affection." Although intellectually she is feeble, quite incapable of benefiting from Mr. Gradgrind's school, she has the faculty of educating hard hearts, and that is what these hard times need. In *Bleak House* her place is taken, not so competently perhaps, by Esther Summerson, who also possesses the same healing touch. The apotheosis of this type of character is Little Dorrit, who in spite of natural disadvantages, which she shares with Esther and Sissy, is nevertheless a source of strength because of her power of affection; and her prominence is emphasized by the change of title, made shortly before the publication of Part 1, from "Nobody's Fault" to *Little Dorrit*.[1]

Nevertheless, the novel began as "Nobody's Fault," and that theme is never abandoned. The title is satirical and political in its implications, and therefore it is topical. The publication of the book extended from November 30, 1855, to May 31, 1857; but Dickens was at work on it for much longer than that. It is more deliberately pondered than any novel except *Our Mutual Friend*; and in this respect it forms a notable contrast with *Martin Chuzzlewit*, upon which he was at work for little more than six weeks before the publication of the first Number. For *Little Dorrit* he had been at work certainly for eleven months and possibly for longer. It was in January 1855 that he began to keep a Memorandum Book (now in the Berg Collection, New York Public Library) of notions and names for possible use in novels and short stories, and the first entry reads, "The unwieldy ship taken in tow by the snorting little steam Tug," which he has subsequently annotated "Done in Casby and Pancks."

II

January 1855, which found Dickens pondering *Little Dorrit*, found the country suffering from ten months of war in the Crimea, and so grievously disturbed by the revelation of administrative failures that a Commission of Enquiry had been appointed. The Crimean failures seemed to bear out what the Northcote-Trevelyan report on the Civil Service had argued in November 1853, that reform was urgently necessary. An Administrative Reform Association was founded in May 1855, of which Dickens early became a member, and on June 15 and 18 there was a debate in the House of Commons on the subject. *The Times*

had devoted several leading articles to it; the comment after the first day of the debate (June 16) read as follows:

> The real object of all this desultory movement for Administrative Reform . . . is to say "No" to importunate incompetency, to intrusive folly, to exclusive rank, to obstructive stupidity, to aggressive arrogance, and the other numberless applicants that fill the great anteroom of the State, and keep out modest virtue.

But alas for the hopes of Dickens and his friends, though Palmerston, the new prime minister, accepted the modest reform of entry to the Civil Service through public examinations, he obtained in the division a large majority of 253; and when the Committee of Enquiry into the Crimean failures reported in July, they were constrained to admit that they could find Nobody responsible.

A few other events must be recalled from this summer and autumn, when *Little Dorrit* was taking shape in Dickens' mind. On June 11 the banking firm of Strahan, Paul, and Bates suspended payment. In the investigation which followed, it was discovered that the directors had fraudulently disposed of securities to the extent of £113,625, and were able to pay only three shillings and twopence in the pound. On October 26, the chairman, Sir John Paul, was sentenced to 14 years' penal servitude. Long before this verdict was passed, *The Times* (June 22, 1855) was commenting with acrimony on this "select society of gentlemen, high in the fashionable, and even the religious world, living in magnificent style for years and years on the deposits of a number of confiding, and even admiring, noblemen and gentlemen," whose failure had caused such widespread ruin, "that the calamity has almost assumed the proportions of a national event."

Two other banks were to fail within the next twelve months. On February 16, 1856, John Sadleir, M.P. for Sligo, committed suicide. He was the founder of the Tipperary Joint Stock Bank, of which his brother was manager and sole director. The Sadleirs had published a false balance-sheet earlier that month and had attracted thereby a large quantity of small savings, all of which, to a total of £400,000, were lost. Finally, on September 3, 1856, the Royal British Bank failed, with similar results in ruin and misery to the unfortunate depositors.

One more glance must be taken at the summer of 1855. In June, shortly after the debate on Administrative Reform, Lord Robert Grosvenor introduced a bill in the House of Commons to regulate Sunday trading. Its effects would have borne more hardly upon the poorer parts of the community than upon the wealthy, and it was regarded with

some disfavour by Palmerston, who (in the words of *The Times*) wished "Lord Robert Grosvenor and his Sabbatarian tomfoolery" in the Crimea. This time the public took the affair into its own hands. There were riots in Hyde Park on Sunday, July 1, and on July 3 Grosvenor was induced to withdraw his bill. But the Sabbatarians were evidently an influential group. The following summer (1856) the Government arranged for a military band to perform in Kensington Gardens from 3 to 6 on Sunday afternoons, and these concerts attracted some 50,000 people. We are told (*Annual Register*, April 13, 1856) that "very great disapprobation was excited in the various religious bodies," but that Palmerston stood his ground until the Archbishop of Canterbury threatened to raise the matter in the House of Lords. The performances were then discontinued.

III

Letters, speeches, and contributions to *Household Words* written at this time all show Dickens' preoccupation with the great question of Administrative Reform. His letters to his friend Layard, the founder of the Administrative Reform Association, are particularly interesting. He wrote to him on April 3, 1855, telling him that he had enlisted *Punch*, the *Illustrated London News*, and the *Weekly Chronicle* in Layard's campaign, and added: "If you ever see any new loophole, cranny, needle's-eye, through which I can present your case in *Household Words*, I most earnestly entreat you as your staunch friend and admirer—you *can* have no truer—to indicate it to me at any time or season, and to count upon my being Damascus Steel to the core." The following week (April 10) he was writing again to Layard to summarize the situation as he saw it:

> There is nothing in the present time at once so galling and so alarming to me as the alienation of the people from their own public affairs. I have no difficulty in understanding it. They have had so little to do with the game through all these years of Parliamentary Reform, that they have sullenly laid down their cards, and taken to looking on. The players who are left at the table do not see beyond it, conceive that gain and loss and all the interest of the play are in their hands, and will never be wiser until they and the table and the lights and the money are all overturned together. And I believe the discontent to be so much the worse for smouldering, instead of blazing openly, that it is extremely like the general mind of France before the breaking-out of the first Revolution, and is in danger of being turned by any one of a thousand accidents—a bad harvest—the last strain too much of aristocratic insolence or incapacity—a defeat abroad—a mere chance at home—into such a devil of a conflagration as never has been beheld since.

> Meanwhile, all our English tuft-hunting, toad-eating, and other manifestations of accursed gentility . . . ARE expressing themselves every day. So, every day, the disgusted millions with this unnatural gloom are confirmed and hardened in the very worst of moods. Finally, round all this is an atmosphere of poverty, hunger, and ignorant desperation, of the mere existence of which, perhaps not one man in a thousand of those not actually enveloped in it, through the whole extent of this country, has the least idea.
>
> It seems to me an absolute impossibility to direct the spirit of the people at this pass, until it shows itself. If they would begin to bestir themselves in the vigorous national manner . . . I for one should be in such a movement, heart and soul, and should think it a duty of the plainest kind to go along with it (and try to guide it), by all possible means.

But in the meanwhile Dickens evidently felt that something could be done in *Household Words*. His manner there shows less desperation; the satirical humorist takes control, though he leaves his reader in no possible doubt of what conclusions to draw. In the issue of February 3, 1855, he made an ironic distinction between the public to which politicians appeal and the reflecting public:

> The reflecting public is convinced that the system of administering their affairs is innately bad; that classes and families and interests, have brought them to a very low pass; that the intelligence, steadfastness, foresight, and wonderful power of resource, which in private undertakings distinguish England from all other countries, have no vitality in its public business; [and] that while every merchant and trader has enlarged his grasp and quickened his faculties, the Public Departments have been drearily lying in state, a mere stupid pageant of gorgeous coffins and feebly-burning lights.

Later the same month (February 17) he published in *Household Words* a fairy tale about a powerful prince named Bull, who "could not by any means get servants to suit him, and . . . had a tyrannical old godmother whose name was Tape." Among his subjects "were a number of very ingenious men, who were always busy with some invention or other, for promoting the prosperity of the Prince's subjects, and augmenting the Prince's power. But, whenever they submitted their models for the Prince's approval, his godmother stepped forward, laid her hand upon them, and said 'Tape.'" There were more fairy tales in April. The Arabian Nights were brought up to date as "The Thousand and One Humbugs"; in one of these (April 28) Tape reappeared as Scarli Tapa, who noticed the captain of a band of robbers advancing to a door in an antediluvian rock, "on which were the enchanted letters O.F.F.I.C.E." The Captain pronounced the words "Debrett's Peerage. Open Sesame," and of course the door opened and shut fast behind him. The rest of

the story need not be related, except to remark that Scarli Tapa is in league with a merchant's daughter, Jobbiana, who has influence in the City.

Of many other articles in *Household Words*, only two need be mentioned. The first is entitled "The Toady Tree," and was published on May 26, 1855. In it Dickens inquires why it is that society does not accept the obvious conclusion about administrative reform which the Northcote-Trevelyan Report of 1853 advocated more than twelve months before the Crimean War revealed the extent of the confusion. Why is it that Englishmen do not all immediately recognize that "no privileged class should have an inheritance in the administration of the public affairs"? The only reason can be that they are snobs and toadies; they all love to sit under the shade of the great Toady Tree, "the tree of many branches, which grows to an immense height in England, and which overshadows all the land." In illustration of their inconsistency, he tells a number of anecdotes, one of which has an immediate bearing on our theme.

> The other day, walking down Piccadilly from Hyde Park Corner, I overtook Hobbs. Hobbs had two relations starved to death with needless hunger and cold before Sebastopol, and one killed by mistake in the hospital at Scutari. Hobbs himself had the misfortune, about fifteen years ago, to invent a very ingenious piece of mechanism highly important to dockyards, which has detained him unavailingly in the waiting-rooms of public offices ever since, and which was invented last month by somebody else in France, and immediately adopted there. Hobbs had been one of the public at Mr. Roebuck's committee, the very day I overtook him, and was burning with indignation at what he had heard. "This Gordian knot of red tape," said Hobbs, "must be cut. All things considered, there never was a people so abused as the English at this time, and there never was a country brought to such a pass. It will not bear thinking of—(Lord Joddle)." The parenthesis referred to a passing carriage, which Hobbs turned and looked after with the greatest interest. "The system," he continued, "must be totally changed. We must have the right man in the right place (Duke of Twaddleton on horseback), and only capability and not family connexions placed in office (brother-in-law of the Bishop of Gorhambury). We must not put our trust in mere idols (how do you do!—Lady Coldveal—little too highly painted, but fine woman for her years), and we must get rid as a nation of our ruinous gentility and deference to mere rank. (Thank you, Lord Edward, I am quite well. Very glad indeed to have the honour and pleasure of seeing you. I hope Lady Edward is well. Delighted, I am sure)." Pending the last parenthesis, he stopped to shake hands with a dim old gentleman in a flaxen wig, whose eye he had been exceedingly solicitous to catch, and, when we went on again, seemed so refreshed and braced by the interview that I believe him to have been for the time actually taller.

My last quotation from *Household Words* belongs to the following year, fifteen months after "The Toady Tree." It is entitled "Nobody, Somebody, and Everybody," and draws attention to the enormous power which Nobody was then wielding in England, and to the many proceedings for which he alone was responsible. "It was he [during the late war] who left the tents behind, who left the baggage behind, who chose the worst possible ground for encampments. . . . In civil matters we have Nobody equally active. When a civil office breaks down, the breakdown is sure to be in Nobody's department. . . . A despatch of the greatest moment is sent to a minister abroad, at a most important crisis; Nobody reads it. British subjects are affronted in a foreign territory; Nobody interferes." And there is much more to the same effect.

IV

"Nobody, Somebody, and Everybody" was published on August 30, 1856, and clearly reflected on the inability of the commissioners to attach blame for the Crimean disasters. It coincided with the publication of *Little Dorrit*, Part 10; and it shows that the long-abandoned title "Nobody's Fault" still had some power over Dickens' mind. With that exception, all the articles mentioned were published before he had completed the first number of his book. They are not reflected either in that number or in the second. With his mind full of administrative reform, he nevertheless contrived to write two numbers with very little topicality in them, apart from chapter III, that gloomy picture of an English Sunday which offered an apposite comment upon Lord Robert Grosvenor's "Sabbatarian tomfoolery."

He was holding himself in. His chosen title proclaimed "Nobody's Fault," and his second number-plan asked the question "The man who comfortably charges everything on Providence?" To which he gave the answer, "Not yet." But in Part 3, written in the second half of September, 1855, he introduces his readers to the Circumlocution Office, and we begin to see him working in the novel with the same strands that he had been using in *Household Words*. In the magazine he had twice accused government offices of discouraging inventors,[2] and the point is made once more in Part 3, when Arthur Clennam is introduced by Mr. Meagles at the Circumlocution Office to the discouraged inventor Daniel Doyce. The second inventor in the magazine was the inconsistent Hobbs of "The Toady Tree." In the novel Hobbs's inconsistency of exclaiming against government, but of toadying to the aristocracy, is given to

Meagles instead of Doyce. Good businessman as he is, eminently practical, and with the kindest of hearts, Meagles nevertheless dearly loves a lord. In chapter XVII he is told, in Daniel Doyce's presence, that Henry Gowan has brought a guest to dinner, one of the Barnacles: "A Barnacle, is he? *We* know something of that family, eh, Dan? By George, they are at the top of the tree, though! Let me see. What relation will this young fellow be to Lord Decimus now? . . ." This occurs in Part 5; and though opportunities could have been taken in Part 3, where the Circumlocution Office is introduced, it is the first of many occasions when Meagles shows this trait. Presumably the trait did not belong to Dickens' first notion of the character.

It is in Part 6 that readers are first introduced to Society and the Merdles. That number was published on April 30, 1856, and had been finished early in March. It could therefore have been inspired by the Sadleir affair, since John Sadleir committed suicide on February 16, three days before Dickens began work on this number.[3] But administrative confusion, aristocratic pretensions, and jobs in the City were already associated in Dickens' mind when he was writing "The Thousand and One Humbugs" in the previous May; and if he needed any further lead, he could have found it in what *The Times* had said on June 22 (quoted above, p. 3) about Sir John Paul and his fraudulent associates. Merdle, or somebody like Merdle, would probably have been found in the novel even if Sadleir had never become notorious. A letter Dickens wrote to Forster after finishing Part 6 confirms this:

> I had the general idea of the Society business before the Sadleir affair, but I shaped Mr. Merdle himself out of that precious rascality. Society, the Circumlocution Office, and Mr. Gowan, are of course three parts of one design. Mr. Merdle's complaint, which you will find in the end to be fraud and forgery, came into my mind as the last drop in the silver cream-jug on Hampstead-heath.

This episode serves to put the topicality of *Little Dorrit* in its correct proportions. It is not that Dickens required the notorieties of the mid eighteen-fifties to provide him with episodes and characters for his novel; it is rather that he had already taken imaginative stock of the situation when some fresh event occurred to confirm his diagnosis and to supply him with an illustrative example. He might have sympathized with the predicament which Pope expresses in the *Epilogue to the Satires*:

> Vice with such Giant-strides comes on amain,
> Invention strives to be before in vain;
> Feign what I will, and paint it e'er so strong,
> Some rising Genius sins up to my Song.

What is true of Merdle is true in a different, and perhaps more trivial, sense of Flora Finching. She too was topical, inasmuch as her prototype, Maria Winter, had re-entered Dickens' life in February 1855. But she comes home to all of us, as Dickens recognized, when he wrote to the Duke of Devonshire (July 5, 1856):

> I am so glad you like Flora. It came into my head one day that we have all had our Floras (mine is living, and extremely fat), and that it was a half serious half ridiculous truth which had never been told. It is a wonderful gratification to find that everybody knows her.

It is also true of chapter III, describing the gloom of a London Sunday. Sabbatarianism had been an old object of Dickens' attack. He had tilted at it in a pamphlet written as early as 1836; he returned to it in 1850, when it was decided that there should be no collection or delivery of letters on a Sunday,[4] and again in August 1855 on the occasion of a parliamentary Committee of Enquiry into the Sunday opening of taverns and tea-gardens. Lord Robert Grosvenor's bill was the merest episode; but it served to stimulate him once more; and before the novel was complete he had witnessed the controversy over the Sunday afternoon concerts in Kensington Gardens. It is as though Dickens were declaring in *Little Dorrit* that Sabbatarianism, and Merdleism, and Circumlocution, and Toadyism are part of the Victorian scene. They are, as he declares in his Preface, part of "the common experience of an Englishman." As though to add a further touch of verisimilitude to his story, houses conveniently begin to fall in the neighbourhood of Moorgate and Tottenham Court Road.[5]

V

Though these, and several other details,[6] belong unmistakably to the mid eighteen-fifties, the scene of many episodes was placed in a prison which had ceased to be used in 1849, and of which Dickens' own experience went back to 1822. No doubt he chose the Marshalsea because he could recall it vividly; but he must have recognized that by giving it so much prominence, he was distancing the action of his story, and throwing back the events of the mid fifties by at least ten years. I assume that his decision was deliberate, and that his reason was to remove any lingering sense among his readers of the merely topical. These things were happening in the mid fifties, admittedly; but they might equally well have happened in the mid forties, and they may be recurring in the mid sixties. That we are still reading *Little Dorrit* today suggests that Dickens was fully justified in distancing his action.

NOTES

1 The change in title is discussed in John Butt and Kathleen Tillotson, *Dickens at Work* (London, 1957), 222–33.

2 In "A Poor Man's Tale of his Patent" (Oct. 19, 1850) and "Prince Bull: A Fairy Tale" (Feb. 17, 1855).

3 Dickens writes to Miss Coutts on February 19, saying that he is settling himself to *Little Dorrit* again, "and in the usual wretchedness of such settlement."

4 "The Sunday Screw," *Household Words*, June 22, 1850.

5 See *Annual Register*, Sept. 3, 1856; *Saturday Review*, July 4, 1857.

6 For example, the wretched Maggy, who had had so bad a fever at ten years old that she had never grown since, is made to testify in chapter IX to the comforts of hospital life: " 'Such beds there is there!' cried Maggy. 'Such lemonades! Such oranges! Such d'licious broth and wine! Such Chicking! Oh, AIN'T it a delightful place to go and stop at!' " She may be supposed to have been an inmate of the Hospital for Sick Children in Great Ormond Street, opened in 1852. Dr. Charles West, who was associated with this hospital from the beginning, writes in his *How to Nurse Sick Children* (1854), of providing such nourishment as "arrowroot and a little wine perhaps, or chicken broth" (p. 68), and T. T. Higgins, *Great Ormond Street 1852–1952*, mentions (p. 25) that the consumption of wine was considerable in the first six years. Dickens was to speak at the Anniversary Festival of the Hospital on February 9, 1858.

ERNST STADLER AND THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Leonard Forster

The first number of the *Varsity* for the academic year 1914–15 (Wednesday, September 30, 1914) was overshadowed by the outbreak of hostilities between Britain and Germany and the part that the youth of Canadian universities might be required to play in the war. A small paragraph on the third page reported: "George Henry Needler, B.A., Ph.D. (Leipzig), has been promoted to the head of the department of German. Dr. E. Stadler is now an Associate Professor in German." Exactly one month later, Leutnant Ernst Stadler was killed by a British shell near Ypres on October 30, 1914, aged 31, without ever having taken up his appointment.

Thus ended prematurely the promising career of a man devoted to an ideal of European culture embracing the great common humane tradition of the worlds of French and German speech, with the English-speaking intellectual world as a balancing factor midway between the two. With his energy, humanity, and breadth of interest he had much to give Canada, and doubtless hoped to receive much from the interaction of Canadians and *Canadiens*. His life had been spent on the frontiers of Germanic and Romance culture; he was born at Colmar in Alsace, had studied in Strasbourg and as a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, and until his appointment at Toronto had been professor at the Free University of Brussels. He was one of an important group of young Alsatian intellectuals who in the years before 1914 saw their mission within the German cultural orbit as mediation between the Germanic and Romance worlds.[1] Among his friends in this group was the pacifist novelist and poet René Schickele; among his contemporaries were the sculptor-poet Hans Arp, and Ernst Robert Curtius, the latter devoted to the same ideal as Stadler and enabled by happier fortune to realize it in the form of a life of scholarship of truly European scope. There were men of great literary gifts in this group, but Stadler was generally

recognized as being the most promising. His death in Flanders called forth a great number of spontaneous tributes to his memory from those who had known him personally and from many who knew him only through his poetry. He was considered then and is increasingly recognized now as an important poet. It was however as a scholar that the University of Toronto had engaged him, to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of Professor W. H. Van der Smissen in 1913.

Stadler was the author of four scholarly works. His doctoral thesis at the University of Strasbourg in 1906 dealt with the relation between two manuscripts of Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parzival*—a study in mediaeval philology and textual criticism in the best nineteenth-century tradition. His *Habilitationsschrift* (1908, published 1910), entitling him to the status of *Privatdozent* at the University of Strasbourg, was on Christoph Martin Wieland's eighteenth-century translation of Shakespeare. This translation was the main source for German knowledge of Shakespeare at precisely the time when his impact on German literature was greatest; Stadler had selected a key work in the field of comparative literature at that very time being opened up by Joseph Texte, Louis Betz, and Fernand Baldensperger, the two last Alsatians like himself. Much of the work for this book had been done at Oxford. He continued working in this field for the Oxford B.Litt. degree and submitted a thesis written in English, "The History of Literary Criticism of Shakespeare in Germany," which is now lost. In 1910 there appeared the great work of Friedrich Gundolf on this subject, *Shakespeare und der deutsche Geist*, a landmark in the study of the reception of Shakespeare on the Continent; Stadler was an obvious choice to review it for the *Literarisches Echo* (XIV, 1911–12). Meanwhile a committee of the Prussian Academy of Sciences had been producing a collected critical edition of Wieland's works and had entrusted Stadler with the translations from Shakespeare; three volumes of these appeared between 1909 and 1911, excellently introduced and edited. In 1911 he returned to mediaeval studies with a re-edition of a standard Middle High German text in the recension of Wilhelm Wackernagel. It is not everybody who is capable of gleaning after Wackernagel, and the choice of Stadler for this task was a tribute in itself. At the outbreak of war he was engaged on a literary history of Alsace, an important and extremely interesting topic of which there is still no adequate treatment.

He was, however, also active in criticism of contemporary literature.[2] His own poetic work had brought him into contact with literary circles in Alsace, in Germany proper, in France, and in Belgium (but not, it

seems, in England, though James Elroy Flecker for instance was a contemporary of his at Oxford), and he gave courses at Strasbourg University on modern lyric poetry. His criticism of the early work of his contemporaries Georg Heym, Gottfried Benn, Oskar Loerke, and Franz Werfel—the first generation of young expressionists—is still among the best that has been written on them. It is written with the empathy and comprehension of a man who understood what they were about because he was about the same thing himself.

It has often been observed that this generation of poets in Germany had a mysterious premonition of catastrophe, as the falling barometer indicates the approach of a hurricane. Georg Heym, who did not live to see the outbreak of war in 1914 (he was killed in a skating accident in 1912), expressed the most compelling vision of it in his poem "Der Krieg," written in 1911:

> Aufgestanden ist er, welcher lange schlief,
> Aufgestanden unten aus Gewölben tief,
> In der Dämmerung steht er, gross und unbekannt,
> Und den Mond zerdrückt er in der schwarzen Hand.
>
> In den Abendlärm der Städte fällt es weit,
> Frost und Schatten einer fremden Dunkelheit.
> Und der Märkte runder Wirbel stockt zu Eis.
> Es wird still. Sie sehn sich um. Und keiner weiss. . . .
>
> Eine grosse Stadt versank in gelbem Rauch,
> Warf sich lautlos in des Abgrunds Bauch.
> Aber riesig über glühenden Trümmern steht,
> Der in wilde Himmel dreimal seine Fackel dreht.
>
> Ueber sturmzerfetzten Wolken Widerschein,
> In des roten Dunkels kalten Wüstenein,
> Dass er mit dem Brande weit die Nacht verdorr,
> Pech und Feurer träufet unten auf Gomorrh.

(He that slept long has risen, risen from deep vaults far below. He stands in the dusk, huge and unknown, and crushes the moon to pulp in his black hands. Into the evening noises of the cities there falls far away the frost and shadow of an alien darkness. And the round whirl of the markets stops and turns to ice. A growing silence. They look round. And no one knows. . . . A great city sank into yellow smoke, hurled itself without a sound into the belly of the abyss. But vast he stands above the growing ruins and brandishes his torch three times into the wild heavens above the reflected glow of storm-torn clouds, into the cold deserts of dead darkness, to dry up the night afar with the conflagration, and he pours fire and brimstone down upon Gomorrha.)

Anyone who has been through an air raid in either of the two world wars will recognize the accuracy of this prophetic vision. It is an apocalypse, a Last Judgement, as the last word of the poem indicates, the destruction of a rotten society. Heym, and his contemporaries Georg Trakl and Gottfried Benn, could see their world only negatively. Stadler, in the same generation, saw it positively, but full of people who did not or could not live their lives. Even his poems on the squalor of Whitechapel and Brussels are affirmations of life itself marred by unrealized potentialities. What was needed, he felt, was an "Aufbruch," a striking of tents, a new advance; and the volume of poems in which his distinctive style breaks through is called *Der Aufbruch* (1914). The title poem expresses, in military imagery which came easily to the reserve lieutenant, a revolt against prejudice and apathy and a sense of liberation from outworn conventions. The imagery is itself, however, conventional, and has no more military significance than Péguy's in lines written at much the same time which express, more calmly, a similar new start:

> Voici que je m'en vais en des pays nouveaux:
> Je ferai la bataille et passerai les fleuves;
> Je m'en vais m'essayer à de nouveaux travaux,
> Je m'en vais commencer là-bas les tâches neuves.

Stadler in his poem does not welcome war, as his English contemporary Rupert Brooke did, though Stadler shared the Englishman's contempt for "a world grown old and cold and weary . . . And half-men, and their dirty songs and dreary." But when Rupert Brooke goes on to "all the little emptiness of love," he runs counter to Stadler's compassion on the one hand and his Whitmanesque vitalism on the other. It was not for nothing that Stadler translated Francis Jammes:

> Mon Dieu, puisque mon cœur, gonflé comme une grappe,
> veut éclater d'amour et crève de douleur:
> si c'est utile, mon Dieu, laissez souffrir mon cœur. . . .
>
> Mais que sur le coteau, les vignes innocentes
> mûrissent doucement sous votre Toute-Puissance.
> Donnez à tous tout le bonheur que je n'ai pas,
> et que les amoureux qui vont se parler bas
> dans la rumeur des chars, des bêtes et des ventes
> se boivent des baisers, la hanche sur la hanche,[3]

in which both aspects of his feeling are joined. Love for Stadler is something physical, but it is also the highest physical experience of *losing oneself*; it thus becomes associated in his work with religious imagery.

A very fine poem, in which the Whitmanesque swing of his long lines of free verse is extremely effective, is "In der Frühe," which has been well translated by Babette Deutsch and A. Yarmolinsky:

IN THE MORNING

Your body's silhouette stands darkly in the morning before the troubled light
Of the drawn blinds. I sense, lying in bed, your face turned towards me like
the host in some dim rite.
As from my arms you loose yourself, your whispered "I must go" reaches
the farthest door of my dream's shuttered rest—
Now, as though veiled, I see your hand, as with deft touch it smooths the
shirt upon your breast . . .
The socks . . . and now the coat . . . the hair swept back . . . already you
are strange, dressed for the world and the day . . .
I open the door softly . . . kiss you . . . you nod, already far . . . a farewell
. . . and are gone away.
I hear your soft tread upon the steps, I listen, lying in bed again,
Again I am locked in the scent of your body, as streaming out of the pillows
it winds warmly into my brain.
Morning grows brighter. The curtain blows. Young wind and sun press
inward, flutter and peep.
Tears well up . . . music of morning . . . sung to by the dreams of morning
softly I fall asleep.[4]

The poem is full of warm corporeality, but the girl's face gleams whitely like "the host in some dim rite." These words render (rather inadequately) the one German word *hostiengleich*—like a consecrated wafer[5]—and this piece of religious imagery in this situation is characteristic (but not blasphemous). It is the merging with the forces of life which inspires a religious emotion in Stadler. In the very fine poem "Fahrt über die Kölner Rheinbrücke bei Nacht," frequently included in anthologies, the movement of the train crossing the bridge over the Rhine is assimilated to that of the river as it flows onward: "Naked shores. Tranquillity. Night. Remembrance. Introspection. Communion. And glow and urge to the last, the blessing thing. To the feast of procreation. To bliss. To prayer. To the sea. To extinction." Michael Hamburger, whose essay "1912" in his *Reason and Energy* (New York: Grove Press, 1957) is the best treatment in English of the poets of that generation in Germany, modestly says "I shall not even begin to attempt to elucidate this splendid poem." He nevertheless goes on to write two admirable pages about it which I need not repeat here, except for one sentence: "It is the extraneous image of the sea that dominates the whole poem; for the whole poem is a glorification of the flux of life

itself; and the sea is the destination of that flux." The same image recurs in "Sommer":

> Kornkammern meines Lebens, lang verödet, alle eure Tore sollen nun wie Schleusenflügel offenstehn,
> Ueber euern Grund wird wie Meer die goldne Flut der Garben gehn.

(Granaries of my life, long desolate, all your gates shall stand open like lock-gates, over your floors the golden tide of the sheaves shall go like the sea.)

The attraction of Canada to a man who can write verses like these is that of a young and vital country with immense and uplifting scenery, of a vitality to which his own vitality could respond. We do not know what Stadler knew about Canada, whether he had any particular notions of what the country was like. As a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford he could have met Canadian Rhodes Scholars, who might have told him about their country; it is not known whether he in fact did. One thing that would certainly have attracted him would have been the symbiosis of French and English in Canada. A man who could write "Being an Alsatian is not something outdated, regionally restricted, not narrowing of your horizon, provincialism, 'folk art,' but a perfectly definite and very progressive psychological attitude, a concrete cultural possession to which both Germanic and Romance tradition have contributed invaluable components,"[6] was in a fair way to get on with both Canadians and *Canadiens* and to contribute something to the intellectual life of Canada outside the university lecture room. In a university whose president could say in his inaugural address on September 29, 1914, that "it was not against the *people* of Germany, a people whose intellectual power in every sphere of learning we must recognize, that we fought, but against a nation which was dangerous to the world because infected with the disease of 'Prussian Militarism'" (*Varsity*, Wednesday, September 30, 1914), Stadler's attitude would have been understood. There is an attractive story, which one hopes is true, that Stadler found himself in Flanders opposite trenches held by a French unit which included Charles Péguy. The two men knew one another (Stadler had translated some of Péguy's work) and exchanged messages across No Man's Land. Stadler's began: "Mon cher collègue et confrère." It seems that Péguy did not grasp what Stadler meant, and replied: "Mon ami, je ne vous comprends pas, mais je vous aime."[7] Both poets were killed shortly afterwards. Even if the story is apocryphal, as is very likely, the fact that it could become associated with Stadler's name is a tribute to the man, and to what he might have achieved had he lived. But, as

Péguy wrote, in lines which echo Stadler's quasi-mystical urge to "extinction," his impulse to find himself in losing himself,

> Heureux ceux qui sont morts, car ils sont retournés
> Dans la première argile et la première terre . . .

"Glut und Drang, zum Letzten, Segnenden . . . Zum Untergang" (glow and urge to the last, the blessing thing . . . To extinction).

In appointing Stadler to the vacant post at Toronto, the University was obtaining the services of a brilliant young scholar of considerable achievement who was used, from his experience in Brussels, to expounding German literature to foreigners, who had a good command of English, and who was acquainted at first hand with English academic life and English academic standards. Documentary material on Stadler's life is extremely scanty, and there is no mention of this appointment in his published correspondence. It may therefore be of interest to follow the negotiations about it from the papers preserved in the office of the president of the University; the material also has a certain importance for the history of German studies in Toronto.

It seems that in 1913, the year in which the Professor of German, W. H. Van der Smissen, was to retire, the Chairman of the Board of Governors, Sir Edmund Walker, when on a visit to Europe, made inquiries about a possible successor to him. Stadler's name was mentioned, and he had the opportunity to meet Stadler and sound him.[8] In June he wrote to the President, Sir Robert Falconer, enclosing two letters he had received about Stadler. Sir Robert had also been investigating the matter and, a year before, Professor H. G. Fiedler of Oxford and Professor J. G. Robertson of London had recommended Stadler "as one whom we should be fortunate to secure if we were to have a vacancy in German."[9] Both these men were in a position to know Stadler and his background well. Robertson had been Lecturer in English at Strasbourg from 1896 to 1903, when Stadler's father was Curator of the University, and still maintained contact with the place. Fiedler had become Professor of German at Oxford in 1907, when Stadler was already in residence at Magdalen, and in 1912 Stadler had completed his B.Litt. under his direction. Fiedler's reputation outside the academic world was high; in 1912 he became Tutor to the Prince of Wales. Falconer offered Stadler an associate professorship, and indicated that promotion to a full professorship was possible. "We desire," he wrote, "to make the position an important one and to develop German literature as fully as may be." Stadler replied, in a letter which is not preserved, that

he would be willing to come for two or three years in order to test whether he liked the position. Falconer replied: "it seems to me that if you would come to us for two years at the higher rate of salary as Associate-professor, this would be the most suitable temporary arrangement, and if we were mutually pleased, you could then be appointed full professor permanently."[10] He went on to speak of the great opportunities for work and the high quality of the students in Toronto. Stadler replied: "Holding now a full professorship at the University of Brussels, I should have preferred to be equally appointed full professor at once at your University. I understand, however, that you want to distinguish between the two years of my temporary appointment and the conclusive state, and I should therefore be prepared to accept your honourable offer," but asked for a removal allowance of $250 to $300.[11] Falconer replied that the Board of Governors would not be willing to vote an allowance for removal, but that the usual practice was to date the salary from the first of July, though the newcomer need not enter upon his duties until the middle of September.[12] "I suppose you understand," he wrote, "that a good deal of the work done by you would be in English, and that a considerable fluency in the language would be necessary. From what I have learned, however, I judge that you are able to use English very freely in the class room." Stadler replied, after some delay, "I think that my English will be sufficiently good to enable me to deliver my lectures in English language [*sic*]. I shall try to justify the confidence which you put in my person by calling me to your University and I hope that after two years we shall mutually want to prolong our contract."[13] On February 13, 1914, Falconer wrote: "Yesterday afternoon at the Board of Governors I brought forward your name and recommended that you should be appointed Associate Professor in German in University College, Toronto, for the next two years, at a salary of three thousand dollars a year, the salary to begin on July 1st, 1914, and to terminate on June 30th, 1916. At the end of that period both the Governors and yourself will have an opportunity of reviewing your work and conditions in Toronto, and if, as we all hope will be the case, they are found to be satisfactory, the Governors will appoint you as full professor." He mentioned that he had had a visit from Professor von Dobschütz of Halle who "knew you quite well when he was in Strasburg and spoke in the kindliest terms regarding you." On March 27 Falconer wrote that Stadler had been formally appointed by the Board of Governors the day before, and asked for "an outline of your academic career and your published works, so that in announcing the appointment to the press

I may have full and accurate information to set before the public." On May 12 Stadler replied acknowledging the letter about his appointment, enclosing "a list of my chief publications and an outline of my academic career," and announcing his intention of leaving Europe on September 3 or 4. The last item in the correspondence is a letter from Falconer to Stadler dated June 13. Falconer was sailing from New York to Rotterdam on the *Noordam* on June 16 to attend the tercentenary celebrations of the University of Groningen from June 29 to July 1, and offered to meet Stadler at Rotterdam or Groningen or some other convenient place in case "I may be able to help you in talking over the situation." Stadler was in Strasbourg at the time. There is no indication from his other correspondence whether the meeting ever took place.

The items in this correspondence which interest a biographer most are unfortunately those which are no longer available. The two letters about Stadler which Sir Edmund Walker sent to Sir Robert Falconer in June 1913 were presumably the results of inquiries Sir Edmund had made about him and might be expected to contain interesting information, and the opinions of Robertson and Fiedler would be of great value. The *curriculum vitae* which Stadler sent on May 12, 1914, is the only piece of autobiography of his of which there is any record, and scanty as it doubtless was, it would be of great interest. It would also be interesting to know what, out of his many-sided activity, Stadler considered his "chief publications." It may well be that some future researcher will be able to unearth these papers.[14]

NOTES

1 The Alsatian generation before Stadler included Albert Schweitzer.

2 Stadler's literary work is collected in the two-volume edition by Karl-Ludwig Schneider: *Dichtungen, Gedichte und Uebertragungen mit einer Auswahl der kleinen kritischen Schriften und Briefe* (Hamburg [1955]). Schneider's introduction summarizes in some detail the available information about Stadler's life.

3 "Prière pour que les autres aient le bonheur"; *Dichtungen*, ed. Schneider, I, 206, gives both French and German text.

4 Babette Deutsch and Avrahm Yarmolinsky, *Contemporary German Poetry* (London and New York, 1923), 169.

5 The translation blurs Stadler's imagery here; "some dim rite" is not in the original and falsifies the meaning. Stadler had grown up in Catholic

surroundings and his image of the host is precise and concrete. See also Schneider's comment, *Dichtungen*, I, 81.

6 *Dichtungen*, I, 15.

7 *Ibid.*, 51.

8 Falconer to Walker, June 28, 1913.

9 Falconer to Stadler, June 23, 1913. Letters from Falconer inquiring about Stadler are preserved (to A. L. Smith, Magdalen College, Oxford, April 18, 1913; to Fiedler, Aug. 13, 1913—"Dr. Stadler, whom you so kindly recommended to me last year"; to Robertson, March 24, 1913—"Last summer you mentioned to me a German Rhodes Scholar, Mr. Stadler, of whom also Professor Fiedler spoke in the highest terms"; and again April 17 and 18, 1913), but unfortunately none of the replies. On April 19, 1913, Falconer wrote to Van der Smissen, who was then in England, asking him to see Robertson and Fiedler about Stadler and "if you judge wise" to try and meet Stadler himself in Brussels; there is no indication in the correspondence that these meetings took place. From some of Falconer's letters it appears that he was also considering "two or three of our own graduates, now holding positions in the United States."

10 Falconer to Stadler, Sept. 4, 1913.

11 Stadler to Falconer, Sept. 15, 1913.

12 Falconer to Stadler, Oct. 10, 1913.

13 Stadler to Falconer, Jan. 8, 1914.

14 I am glad to express my gratitude to Professor H. N. Milnes for kind assistance and encouragement, and especially to Miss A. T. MacGillivray, Secretary to the President, who made many inquiries on my behalf and tirelessly searched the papers in her charge, and finally to President Bissell for allowing me access to his archives and permitting the publication of these letters. It may be that the missing material is contained in the files for the years 1913–14 in the Bursar's Office, which cannot be traced at the time of writing (Dec. 1958).

THE CACIQUE OF ONTARIO

Carl F. Klinck

William Richardson (1743–1814), a native of Aberfoyle who had been a theological student, a tutor, and a secretary to an ambassador, became Professor of Humanity (Latin) at Glasgow College in 1772 and taught there until his death. His oddities were certain to be discovered during those 42 years and to be recorded by clever journalists, former students of his, when they got beyond his reach. Thomas Hamilton described him in the novel *Cyril Thornton*; Thomas Campbell and John Gibson Lockhart left touched-up portraits of him for their biographers. A chain of reminiscences passing through Lockhart, Professor Rainy, G. R. Gleig, and Andrew Lang ended in this report:

> Richardson "wore grand black satin breeches and buckles, and sea-green or snuff-coloured silk stockings with gorgeously-wrought clocks. He had a delicate rosy complexion, a beautifully curled white wig with a noble toupee in front, and a ponderous queue behind." He was delightfully courtier-like in manner, could "make young people and small people happy," and he and Young were called Billy and Cocky by their affectionate pupils. It was the day of periwigs, cocked hats, pointed canes, ruffled wrist-bands, prodigious Provosts, and rum punch: an age of Glasgow convivialities, on which Lockhart, as a young man made some cheerful observations.[1]

It was quite in character that Richardson should have been an ornament of the embassy at St. Petersburg, a member of the Literary Society of Glasgow, a bachelor favourite of the ladies, a champion of Ossian, a writer of polished essays for Mackenzie's Edinburgh *Mirror*, and a Shakespearean critic of rare distinction. But how can we fit into this picture his authorship of a tale and a play about aborigines in the wilds of Ontario? His contemporaries could do so, for his interest in the Hurons was not recorded by them as an eccentricity. Perhaps some facts about him, brought together from a great variety of sources, may serve to recreate literary conditions in Britain, more than 175 years

ago, in which the topic of Canadian Indians will seem normal enough on both academic and popular levels.

Richardson's tale, "The Indians," was a good story, likely to appeal to anyone, but it was in fact published in a volume designed for readers of superior taste. Although not in verse, it appeared in the professor's elegant offering of *Poems, Chiefly Rural* (1776), the third edition of a book which his friends in the Foulis firm of Glasgow had originally published in 1774.[2] The action of the tale is set on "an island in the Lake Ontario." Marano is a white girl who was rescued and adopted as a child by the family of Ononthio—a Huron chief—when the Outagami "carried terror to the gates of Albany," killing her parents and separating her from her brother. She is now lamenting the absence of her Indian husband Oneyo (son of Ononthio) who is campaigning with the French against the British invaders at Quebec. It is rumoured that he has been killed in a great battle. At this point, Sidney, a British captive, is brought to the Huron village for the customary torture and sacrifice in honour of the Indian dead. He tells his story and discovers that he is Marano's long-lost brother. Ononthio offers to adopt him in the place of his own son, but Sidney refuses, preferring to live and die as a European, while respecting his sister's choice of the forest life. A new crisis arises when Sidney is accused of being the slayer of Oneyo; he is allowed, however, to tell how he had in fact spared a brave Indian warrior (Oneyo) whom he had overcome in the battle. Ononthio and Marano take Sidney to a place of safety in a romantic cavern, where the girl goes to sleep beside her brother. Oneyo, returning at this time, sees them together and suspects the worst, but he spares the life of Sidney, who had spared him. Oneyo contemplates suicide, but Marano awakes, explains everything, and there is a happy reunion.

The tale's popularity is proved in a curious way. Literary pirates published it under the title of *The Cacique of Ontario*. This pirated edition of 1786, published by a man called Fielding, received the following notice in the *Monthly Review* for December 1786:

> This tale appeared in the year 1776 in the third edition of a volume of poems by Mr. Richardson, professor of humanity at Glasgow, under the title of 'The Indians, a Tale.' The new title seems to be fabricated by a person wholly unacquainted with the Indians of the northern parts of America, whose chiefs are called *Sachems* and not *Caciques*; and though there be a *lake*, yet we believe there is no *tribe*, of the name of *Ontario*. What right the present Editor had to make free with Mr. Richardson's performance, is best known to himself.—N.B. His prefixed advertisement, by which he would, as we apprehend, appear as the original Author, could not,

possibly, have come from the elegant pen of Professor Richardson. What he means by '*fractical* prose,' we cannot discover, unless it be a misprint for *poetical* prose.[3]

The last lines of the review, of course, represent the fumbling of Englishmen attempting to cope with the Ossianic rhythms of the Scottish professor's tale.

Another pirated edition published by "A. Cleugh, No. 23 Ratcliff Highway, London," and based upon Fielding's edition, appeared in 1789.[4] In Cleugh, as in Fielding, there was a gratuitous apology for the anonymous author's peculiarities of content and style—a reflection of the taste and judgment of the piratical entrepreneurs:

> The Author of the following Tale has endeavoured to adhere as closely as possible to the true representation of Indian manners: And if in some passages, the change from enmity to friendship, or from friendship to enmity, shall seem abrupt, he begs that any censure against him may be suspended, till enquiry be made, whether or not, in rude and savage minds, such sudden and seemingly violent transitions, may not be natural.—Tho' the Tale be in prose, the Author does not affect measured or fractical prose: At the same time his respect for his readers, has made him attend to the diction, in so far as not to appear before them in a slovenly or careless manner. His intention was to interest, or amuse them; and he offers them his performance with the utmost diffidence.

If Richardson was annoyed, he was also encouraged to make his own bid for a popular audience. He turned the tale into a poetic play, one of several dramas which he wrote. It was probably this one which provoked a succinct comment by Thomas Hamilton in his novel *Cyril Thornton*. Cyril says that Richardson, in whose household he lived, "wrote a play, too, which if I remember rightly, was damned; if not, it should have been so." "His mind," Thornton (or Hamilton) explained, "was essentially unpoetical. . . . His soul was chained to its tenement, and bore about it too plainly the marks of scholarship and criticism."[5] One needs no such ghost risen from the schoolroom to declare that Richardson is not Shakespeare. Nor, by way of contrast, has he anything in common with George Colman the Younger, who produced and published in 1787 the popular farcical opera about black Indians *Inkle and Yarico*. Richardson's play, *The Indians: A Tragedy* (published in London in 1790), had a modest showing on the stage at the Theatre-Royal, Richmond, probably in 1789 or 1790, complete with two prologues in heroic couplets and an epilogue, the last of these spoken by Mrs. Bernard, who had played Maraino. This actress was the wife of

John Bernard, a famous comedian at Covent Garden who later achieved success in the United States.

The *dramatis personae* included "Ononthio, Onaiyo, Yerdal, Neidan, Sidney, Indians, and Maraino." The changes in the spelling of Maraino and Onaiyo are incidental, but the addition of characters not found in the prose tale is significant. The story in prose had achieved its effects without a villain; the captive was in danger of torture only because revenge was demanded by custom. The *Tragedy,* however, becomes a pseudo-Shakespearean drama of intrigue because of the machinations of two rogues: Neidan, the medicine man, and an Iago-like brave called Yerdal, who covets Onaiyo's wife. Maraino, meanwhile, begins to look like Imogen, and Ononthio to remind us of Prospero. Onaiyo, while he is considering death by his own hand, is as much an "antique Roman" as an Indian. The scene is changed from the "island in the Lake Ontario" to "a forest and Indian village on the side of Lake Huron, in North America." The necessity for five acts has not disturbed the professor's desire for neo-classical unity of place, the various open spaces in and around the village roughly qualifying as a single setting.

The Prologue displays the usual apologies of the bard who

> . . . strives, without the pageantries of art
> In simple phrase to move th' ingenuous heart,

while presenting "an artless and uncultured race," described by Pope:

> Of whom, in Twit'nam's bower, the tuneful tongue
> Of Thames's darling poet sweetly sung;
> Indians, "poor Indians, whose untutor'd minds
> "See God in clouds, or hear him in the winds;
> "Whose souls proud science never taught to stray
> "Beyond the solar path, or milky way."[6]

Readers will be spared quotation from the wearisome passages of intrigue carried on by the pseudo-Shakespearean villains Neidan and Yerdal; even the war-dance led by the medicine man around a cauldron is a poor imitation of the witches in *Macbeth* and the fairies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Shopworn villainy moves uneasily in Richardson's blank verse. He makes a slightly better showing when Ononthio, Sidney, or Maraino speaks in lines reminiscent of the tale and its genteel prose. Sidney is here referring to Ononthio, the sage:

> Yet pity it is such merit should be lost
> Amid this savage wild, nor have the aid

Of European culture; those improvements
That mend the heart, and dignify our nature.
MARAINO: In truth, my brother, I cannot but marvel
At your regret. Think you that in the wild,
Amid the shades and silence of retirement,
Virtue may not be prov'd, and have a field
For exercise? I marvel much your schools
Have not inform'd you, that true piety
From proud philosophy needs little aid,
But may in ev'ry place be known and practis'd:
And what should mend or dignify our nature
But virtue and true piety, I know not.[7]

In the *Monthly Review* of April 1791, Richardson's play was given a notice, written by "Thomas Ogle," a member of the College of Surgeons, who found it "interesting and pathetic":

It possesses not, indeed, any great intricacy nor novelty of plot; it is not eminent for any skilful combinations, nor masterly display of incidents; it surprises us with no new or uncommon varieties of character: but it discloses, in simple language, the feelings of the heart: it awakens our emotions at the beginning, and, with a very few exceptions, it leads us on with increased attention, to the end.[8]

This period piece of charitable criticism does not obscure the obvious point that Richardson had found it easier to appreciate than to imitate Shakespeare.

There was for Richardson, however, a relationship between Shakespeare and Indians which went much deeper than this exercise in Elizabethan playwriting. What he had read about Indians fitted into his theories about life and literature; the Canadian aborigines and Shakespeare's plays were both subjects for "philosophical analysis." Those words in fact appear in the title of his first book of criticism, *A Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of Some of Shakespeare's Remarkable Characters* (1774). The tale about Indians, printed in 1776, was the result of a related process in character study. Richardson made, in his *Philosophical Analysis* and in his later and widely popular essays on Shakespeare's characters,[9] a major contribution to the "genesis of Shakespeare idolatry." He has been described by Professor R. W. Babcock as "probably the foremost psychological critic of Shakespeare in the late eighteenth century,"[10] and thus a forerunner of Hazlitt and Coleridge.

When Mrs. Montagu, Whately, Morgann, and Richardson were overshadowed by the later Romantic critics, Richardson was remembered

and appreciated by a former student, John Wilson ("Christopher North"), writing in *Blackwood's* of July, 1831:

> By much criticism, sincerely or affectedly philosophical, has the genius of Shakespeare been lately belaboured, by true men and pretenders—from Coleridge and Lamb, to Hazlitt and Barry Cornwall. But, after all, with the exception of some glorious things said by the Ancient Mariner and Elia, little new has been added, of much worth, to the Essays of Professor Richardson, a forgotten work, of which a few copies have been saved by thieves from the moths.[11]

Professor Babcock would tentatively propose to draw "a line (possibly a light one) through the fourteen words beginning with 'with' and ending with 'Elia' " in Wilson's remarks."[12] Professors A. C. Bradley, David Nichol Smith, C. F. Johnson, and T. M. Raysor have not gone so far although they have all assisted in the rehabilitation of Richardson.

One must not assume that Richardson contributed also to "the genesis" of Indian idolatry. There was a romantic cult of the "noble savage," but Richardson belonged rather to an earlier school of philosophers who used Indian lore as he used Shakespeare—to make discoveries of general value concerning the nature of man. He was indebted to Edmund Burke and Lord Kames; he knew Henry Mackenzie; and he allied himself with other contemporary thinkers who wrote, for one reason or another, about both literary criticism and uncivilized men. In European terms, he was probably not as close to Rousseau as to Voltaire, who published *L'Ingénu* in 1767 (when Richardson was 24 years of age) and thus anticipated by eight or nine years the Scottish professor's use of Hurons in a philosophic tale.

Such critics were also anthropologists, psychologists, and moralists. Professor Babcock has shown an unmistakable relationship between Richardson and Burke the critic;[13] Burke, it will be remembered, wrote *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* in 1756 and, as Boswell reports in a letter to Temple, confessed to being a collaborator with his cousin William in writing *An Account of the European Settlements in America* (1757).[14] Lord Kames's *Elements of Criticism* (1762), as Professor Babcock proves, was used by Richardson, and through his close association with the Ossianic enthusiasts of Glasgow and Edinburgh, he could not have missed reading Kames's *Sketches of the History of Man* (1774). In a time when literary criticism of James Macpherson's *Fingal: An Ancient Epic Poem* (1762) involved even Dr. Johnson in questions about "heroic" states of society, the state of the American or Canadian Indian was never far out of mind. Henry Mackenzie, in whose *Man of Feeling* (1771) and *Man of the*

World (1773) Professor Fairchild has found contributions to the literature of the "noble savage," is another Scottish contemporary whose books Richardson almost certainly knew when he wrote his tale; and unmistakable evidence of the relationship of these men as Shakespeare critics and polite essayists comes just a little later in Mackenzie's Edinburgh weekly periodical, the *Mirror* (1779–80), for which Richardson wrote several numbers, including his well-known "Criticism on a Scene in Shakespeare's Richard III" (no. 66).

The evidence from Richardson's books suggests that his joint interest in the characters of Shakespeare and in the "natural" men of unrefined societies was the outcome of his philosophical criticism, which stressed both psychologizing and moralizing. He wished to analyse and classify the passions, whether these were imitated in something approaching definable form in Shakespeare's plays or whether they could be found to "co-exist in a state of greater simplicity" (as Wordsworth later said it) in persons living somehow closer to the "natural" state. He worked in the spirit of his age and, more specifically, along the lines of David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1739), which was "an attempt to introduce the experimental Method of Reasoning into Moral Subjects"; Richardson wished to make both criticism and moral observation as scientific as possible. "Difficulty in making just experiments is the principal reason why the knowledge of human nature has been retarded," he said in the Introduction to his *Analysis*, and he went on to envy the "natural philosophers [who] possess great advantages over moralists and metaphysicians, in so far as the subjects of their inquiries belong to the senses, are external, material, and often permanent."[15]

In Shakespeare's imitation of the passions and affections of his characters—human nature somewhat methodized—as well as in the apparently uncomplicated evidences of these passions and affections in an Indian state of society, Richardson might still hope to analyse, compare, and judge for moral purposes: "to make poetry," as he said at the end of that Introduction, "subservient to philosophy, and to employ it in tracing the principles of human conduct." The conclusion to the fifth edition of his *Essays* (1797) shows that he held consistently to this purpose:

> General remarks are often vague; and, to persons of discernment, afford small satisfaction. But if we consider the sentiments and actions, attributed by the poet to his various characters, as so many facts; if we observe their agreement or disagreement, their aim, or their origin; and if we class them according to their common qualities, or connect them by their original principles, we shall ascertain, with some accuracy, the truth of the repre-

sentation. For, without having our judgments founded in this manner, they are liable to change, error, and inconsistency. Thus the moralist becomes a critic: and the two sciences of ethics and criticism appear to be intimately and very naturally connected. In truth, no one who is unacquainted with the human mind, or entertains improper notions of human conduct, can discern excellence in the higher species of poetical composition.[16]

It is quite possible, of course, that Richardson's investigations in Shakespeare could be experimental, but that his treatment of the Indians might be deductive, a wishful application of principles concerning the passions to the inhabitants of a vaguely understood transatlantic community on the shores of Lake Ontario or Lake Huron. The tale would then owe more to Shakespeare studies than to a reading of the source-books of Indian lore, Hennepin, Lahontan, Lafitau, Charlevoix, and Cadwallader Colden. It will be seen that Richardson was too much of a scholar to neglect such authorities. He includes many sociological details concerning the Huron community, and he crowds in all the stock scenes and situations of Indian narratives which the tale will hold: a savage attack upon a colonial village; the rearing of a white girl among the natives; a mixed marriage; the exercise of authority by an "Ononthio," or ruling Elder; submission to the Great Spirit; the ritual sacrifice of captives; the warrior's indifference to torture; mob scenes, festivals, and dances in the villages; bouts of Indian oratory; exhibitions of Indian magnanimity; the adoption of an enemy to replace a dead warrior; and the release of a captive because of a woman's entreaties. This could have been the stuff of Indian farce and melodrama, but in Richardson's hands it had dignity and significance for human nature in general.

Philosophically, such refinement derives from eighteenth-century sentimentalism; narratively, it owes something to Ossian. This is precisely what one would expect from a Scot like Richardson in the age of David Hume, Lord Kames, Henry Mackenzie, and James Macpherson, and particularly from the alert Richardson who in 1775 (a year before the publication of his prose tale) had read before the literary society in Glasgow College an essay on "The Origin of Superstition, Illustrated in the Mythology of the Poems of Ossian." This was the title given the paper when Dr. Patrick Graham, Minister of Aberfoyle, printed it in his *Essay on the Authenticity of the Poems of Ossian* in 1807. In all those years, a note declared, "the Author [Richardson] has not found it necessary to alter, or even to qualify, the opinion, on this subject, which he was then led to entertain."[17] The key sentence of the essay is characteristic:

Men, even in the rudest periods of society, are capable, in some measure, of distinguishing merit, or demerit in human actions; they are capable of being affected by, or being grateful for, deeds of kindness; they are capable of entertaining suitable and corresponding sentiments towards amiable and respectable characters; they love, and they admire. . . .[18]

The Indians are regularly bracketed in this article with the Celts, as in the phrase "A person beloved, or almost revered, by a rude Indian, or Celtic family."

To Henry Mackenzie may go the distinction of first writing fiction about Indians with a touch of Ossian: in *The Man of Feeling* (1771) Professor Fairchild has found passages catching "the cadences—not unlike Ossian—of what passes in English literature for Indian oratory."[19] It is irrelevant, but not uninteresting, to note that something like this could be said about examples of Indian eloquence in Cadwallader Colden's *The History of the Five Indian Nations of Canada*, first published in New York in 1727, but enlarged in an English edition of 1747—a long time before Macpherson's *Fingal* (1762). Reference can also be made to the early *Letters from the Mountains* of Anne Macvicar, better known now as Mrs. Grant of Laggan, who "though scarce seventeen"[20] in the spring of 1773, when she had visited friends in Richardson's Glasgow, had brought with her both reminiscences of a childhood spent in the Indian lands of upper New York State, and an "Ossianick mania,"[21] more recently acquired. In her *Poems on Various Subjects* (1803) is "An Ode: On Reading One upon the Same Subject by Professor Richardson of Glasgow"—a reference to "The Indians: An Ode," probably a very early poem of Richardson's about "the barbarity perpetrated by the Spaniards in America."[22] The claim for Mackenzie's priority as an Ossianic storyteller about Indians is probably justified, and Richardson may be counted a close second. Here is the first speech of Marano, the lonely wife, as she waits for Oneyo:

"When will he return?" she said, "my beloved Oneyo! the husband of my affections! How I long to behold him! Ye waves of Ontario, convey him to his native shore, restore him to his friends, restore him to my tender embrace. O when shall I behold him? When will the swift canoe come bounding over the lake, and waft the hero to his gladsome isle! Yes, thou happy Isle! Thy rocks, thy resounding glades and thy forests shall then rejoice. . . ."

The special texture of the tale is achieved by the combining of such Ossianic pictures and rhythms with stately philosophical speeches, particularly by the old *sachem* or *cacique*, Ononthio, a name which was originally a popular term for governors of New France. Ononthio says

to Sidney, as they debate the relative advantages of Indian and civilized life:

"All our affections as we receive them from nature are lively and full of vigour. By refinement they are enfeebled. . . . In time ye grow callous; ye become refined; your feelings are extinguished; ye scoff at benevolence, and reckon friendship a dream. Ye become unjust and perfidious; the slaves of avarice and ambition; the prey of envy, of malice, and revenge. Away with your refinement! enjoy the freedom and simplicity of nature. Be guiltless—Be an Indian."

A French reader of this time—in the last days of Rousseau and Voltaire, both of whom died in 1778, when the tale was two years old—would have felt that these were familiar sentiments. There is a curious parallel in an old French book which also deals with the Huron Indians of Canada—the Baron de Lahontan's *Nouveau Voyage dans l'Amérique septentrionale* (1703), readily available in translation in a modern edition edited by Stephen Leacock.[23] Here is "A Conference or Dialogue between the Author and Adario, a Noted Man among the Savages, Containing a Circumstantial View of the Customs and Humours of that People."[24] This Adario has been identified as the famous Huron chief known as Kondiaronk, or the "Rat." But Leacock asserts in an editorial note that "Adario is not Kondiaronk; Adario is Lahontan," as he "extols the simple life of the savage and the equality and liberty of uncivilized man."[25] In Richardson's milder and more refined dialogue, Ononthio appears to be Richardson, weighing the passions, sentiments, and conduct of the Indians and Sidney's civilized compatriots.

The tale thus serves to indicate some common elements in the writings of early English Canada and French Canada. Richardson's Canadian story in the English language owes many of its details to French sources. One might look to Cadwallader Colden's American book, *The History of the Five Indian Nations of Canada* (1727), but not to Jonathan Carver's famous *Travels*, which came too late (1778). Carver's own literary authorities appear to have been Hennepin, Lahontan, and Charlevoix.[26] William and Edmund Burke had borrowed extensively from Lafitau for their description of "The Manners of the Americans" in *Settlements in America* (1757). Seven years before the "Tale" was published, in 1769, the first "Canadian" novelist, Mrs. Frances Brooke, a friend of Dr. Johnson, had acknowledged her indebtedness to the Jesuit missionaries, and to Rousseau and Lafitau, in her novel *The History of Emily Montague*, which described the white men and Hurons whom she had observed while she resided in Quebec. The Hurons and Canada itself, along the St. Lawrence and into the Great Lakes, had

long been French, and had come into the British sphere only after Wolfe's victory at Quebec in 1759. Ononthio, the *cacique* of Richardson's tale, was a Huron who had learned much from Frenchmen; Sidney had been an officer under Wolfe; and Marano, his long-lost sister, was an English girl married to Ononthio's son, an Indian who had fought under Montcalm. Their family reconciliation may be interpreted as symbolic. Judging principally by philosophy and anthropology, Richardson could see the colony of Canada making a fresh start under British rule, with an Anglo-French tradition of many common elements and mutual understanding. The historians of our literature may come to regard Richardson's observation as accurate and significant. He was too close to the American events of 1776, the year his tale was published, to sense that Canadian literature was also on the way to becoming unique: that the colonies to the south might soon leave the British North alone to find its own free expression without renunciation of two Old World heritages.

Although Richardson never wrote as a Canadian, he has a definite place in nurturing the literary talent soon to be set in British North American soil. His influence, as a teacher if not as an author—or as a teacher because he was such an author—may have extended far beyond calculation. He taught, at Glasgow, youths who became authors and journalists commanding an audience throughout the English-speaking world. Among them were Thomas Campbell (who thrilled the readers of his *Gertrude of Wyoming* by turning Hurons into monsters!); John Wilson ("Christopher North"), John Gibson Lockhart, and Captain Thomas Hamilton—now known as the stalwarts of *Blackwood's*, the great Scottish-colonial magazine of the early nineteenth century—and probably also William "Tiger" Dunlop, a Glasgow medical student, who helped to develop in the forests of Upper Canada, near "the shores of Lake Huron, in North America," a way of life at once primitive and cultured, which owed more than we realize to an application of the moral criticism of Richardson and his Scottish contemporaries.[27]

NOTES

1 Andrew Lang, *The Life and Letters of John Gibson Lockhart* (London, 1897), I, 23. See G. R. Gleig, "The Life of Lockhart," *Quarterly Review*, CXVI (Oct. 1864), 439–82.

2 *Notices and Documents Illustrative of the Literary History of Glasgow, during the Greater Part of Last Century* (Glasgow, 1831), x, 31, 32.

3 *Monthly Review*, ser. 1, vol. LXXV (Dec. 1786), 474. The reviewer refers to Richardson's *Poems, Chiefly Rural* (3rd. ed.: Glasgow, 1776).

4 A copy of the Cleugh edition (1789) of *The Cacique of Ontario* is in the Toronto Reference Library.

5 [Thomas Hamilton] *The Youth and Manhood of Cyril Thornton* (Edinburgh and London, 1827). See chaps. v–ix.

6 See Richardson's *Poems and Plays* (Edinburgh, 1805), II, 22.

7 *Ibid.*, 90–1.

8 *Monthly Review*, ser. 2, vol. IV (April 1791), 430–4. Ogle has been identified by Benjamin Christie Nangle, *The Monthly Review, Second Series, 1790–1815* (Oxford, 1955).

9 Richardson, *Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Characters of Richard III, King Lear, and Timon of Athens* (1784); *Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff and on his Imitation of Female Characters* (1789). With some further variations of titles, Richardson's essays on Shakespeare appeared in at least sixteen reprints. See R. W. Babcock's note in *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XXVIII (1929), 117, and in his *The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1931), 255–9. Cf. T. M. Raysor, "The Study of Shakespeare's Characters in the Eighteenth Century," *Modern Language Notes*, XLII (Dec. 1927), 495–500.

10 Babcock, *Genesis*, 159.

11 *Blackwood's*, XXX (July 1831), 94.

12 Babcock, *Genesis*, 227.

13 R. W. Babcock, "William Richardson's Criticism of Shakespeare," *JEGP*, XXVIII (1929), 117–36.

14 *Letters of James Boswell*, ed. C. B. Tinker (Oxford, 1924), II, 387, letter to Temple dated 28th Nov. 1789.

15 Richardson, *Philosophical Analysis* (Boston, 1808), 11.

16 Richardson, *Essays* (1797), 398–9.

17 Richardson, "The Origin of Superstition," in Graham, *Essay* (Edinburgh, 1807), 443.

18 *Ibid.*, 416.

19 Hoxie N. Fairchild, *The Noble Savage* (New York, 1928), 90.

20 [Mrs. Anne Grant] *Letters from the Mountains* (Boston, 1809), 13–14.

21 *Ibid.*, 21.

22 Richardson, *Poems, Chiefly Rural* (1781), 168–72.

23 Stephen Leacock, ed., *Lahontan's Voyages* (Ottawa, 1932).

24 *Ibid.*, 272ff.

25 *Ibid.*, 347–8.

26 Compare the views of E. G. Bourne in the *American Historical Review*, XI (Jan. 1906), 287–302, and of Milo M. Quaife in the *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, I (Sept. 1914), 167–84.

27 "Journal (to) Labrador in 1771," attributed to William Richardson (1743–1814) in the *Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature* (1940), II, 755, is properly by Lieutenant William Richardson, R.N. (1748–72): see the *Canadian Historical Review*, XVI (March 1935), 54–61.

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SCHOLARSHIP AND CRITICISM

George Whalley

Somebody has suggested that scholarship is to criticism what engineering is to architecture. At first sight this is an attractive analogy. Without some appreciation of engineering principles the architect's building may collapse. Perhaps that was the main point in making the analogy. However, the figure carries disturbing overtones, in the hint that criticism not only stands upon the shoulders of humble scholarship, but also may have something —as architecture does—to do with designing things. Without an architect's design an engineer may be expected to produce a structure useful and durable enough but probably inducing no sense of delight. But what does a critic design? and if he does produce a plan of some structure to be built to, is it as a critic that he does so? and who would be the builder? It may simply be that the apparently guileless analogy is heavy with latent clouds of glory, for Vitruvius has it that

> An Architect ought to understand Languages, to be skillful of Painting, well-instructed in Geometrie, not ignorant of Perspective, furnished with Arithmeticke, have knowledge of many histories, and diligently have heard Philosophers, have skill of Musicke, not ignorant of Physicke, know the answeres of Lawyers, and have Astronomie, and the courses Celestial, in good knowledge.

Leo Baptista Albertus, in a similar vein of transcendent rhapsody, asserts that the Architect is

> that man, who hath the skill, (by a certaine and meruailous meanes and way,) both in minde and Imagination to determine . . . what works so euer, by motion of weight, and cuppling and framyng together of bodyes, may most aptly be Commodious for the worthiest Uses of Man. . . . Wherupon he is neither Smith, nor Builder: nor, separately, any Artificer; but the Hed, the Provost, the Directer and Judge of all Artificiall workes, and all Artificers.

So much for architects. If scholars be to such demigods mere hod-carriers, their relation to criticism may warrant examination.

The traditional and vulgar views of the scholar are—one must confess—heavily weighted with a sense of comedy, particularly on the score of his minuteness and his detachment.

> They have as much need of hellebore as others [Burton tells us]. They have a worm as well as others. You shall find a phantastical strain, a fustian, a bombast, a vain-glorious humour, an affected style . . . run parallel throughout their works. . . . They bewray and daub a company of books and good authors with their absurd comments . . . and shew their wit in censuring others, a company of foolish note-makers, humble bees, dors or beetles. . . . Yet if any man dare oppose or contradict, they are mad, up in arms on a sudden, how many sheets are written in defence, how bitter invectives, what apologies?

Cervantes and Sterne give us different versions—hilarious but poignant—of the learned mind alienated from the real world; and Rabelais makes excellent use of a cumbersome grotesque erudition grown carcinomatous. Virgilius Maro, the grammarian of Toulouse, who flourished—if flourish is the correct word—round about the seventh century, tells a story of two scholars of his time who for 15 days and nights, without food or sleep, argued about the frequentative of the verb *to be*, and nearly ended the discussion at sword-point. Virgil of Toulouse might himself have been one of these: at least his choice of a name is some measure of his conceit. Yeats's lines, written when he was living in Oxford in 1914–15, shape a familiar portrait of the scholars:

> Bald heads forgetful of their sins,
> Old, learned, respectable bald heads
> Edit and annotate the lines
> That young men, tossing on their beds,
> Rhymed out in love's despair
> To flatter beauty's ignorant ear.

Yet there is something splendid about Virgil of Toulouse arguing whether there can be a vocative of *ego* while ancient empires crashed and dissolved about his ears. And we hesitate to dismiss even him out of hand as a mere pedant, recalling that it was he who first traced the transition of Latin into Provençal, and the transition of quantitative Latin verse into the accentual vernacular line. We may also recall that the labours of the mediaeval and humanist grammarians and editors resulted in the formation of what we now call style, evolved painfully out of the struggle between the ordered resonance of the classical tongues and the fluid recalcitrance of vulgar living speech.

The mediaeval and humanist scholar's concern—after grammar and rhetoric—was to establish a pure text when the text (if it existed) was

illegible, fragmentary, or corrupt; he wished to preserve the *ipsissima verba* of texts made sacred by time, or worship, or delight. After the text, his concern was for understanding the text. This was not criticism perhaps in the present meaning of the word, but an activity of unfolding and interpreting in the light of all that was known; the cumulative shedding of light upon writings too adamantine to alter, too powerful to ignore, too fugitive in spirit to dominate. The resources of mediaeval commentary and exposition, regarded simply as pedagogic technique, were not inconsiderable. And the exploitation of contrary principles and methods provoked the wars of the schools and fostered the invention of heresies. The truculent and murderous behaviour of some scholars to some other scholars is strangely at variance with the detachment and humility that seem more proper to the recondite arts. Yet to see a learned throat slit with skill and relish, to witness the neat impaling of an opponent's absurdity on the pin of an epigram—these are among the inexhaustible delights of classical scholarship. It is like a decorous ritual of mutilation, deadly but without essential malice. For the point at issue, one feels, is not really the conflict of opinion but the integrity of early scholar. A scholar scornfully exposes a fellow pundit's folly, it knowledge, the integrity of language—the two prime concerns of the would seem, not simply because the miscreant has been ignorant, obtuse, or barbarous (though that would be reason enough), but because this man had the means of discovering something that could be set down for all time, and at the crucial moment had fumbled it. Scholarship, like watch-making, requires a good eye and a delicate touch. To see some detail of factual truth slip through the clumsy fingers of another scholar is to suffer an excruciating shock of annoyance, a surge of futile rage. For in scholarship, once a fact is caught, it is caught for good and all. But once a false fact or conclusion has been set down it may be fruitful and multiply, perpetuating itself in mis-shapen offspring.

A fully annotated classical text, in which to the unappreciative eye the notes crowd the text to death, is an impressive—even moving—performance: it brings into single compass a great store of miscellaneous relevancies drawn (it may be) from many centuries and many sources, all sifted and arranged by some final editor, who ideally is learned, urbane, and tactful. We seem here to see the noble army of scholars, their marginal squabbles at last forgotten, marching with a proud and pettifogging detachment *behind* their text. For the quarrelsomeness of scholars—the intolerable vanity in some and the total lack of discrimination in others—points in one direction: to the fact that scholarship is

cumulative and co-operative, that it deals with facts to do with specific texts and contexts, and that the scholar is the accumulator and guardian of the monuments of civilization, and of all knowledge that illuminates them.

A provisional sketch may be attempted. The ideal scholar is often by habit or necessity a teacher; but he will never cease to be a learner. To a great extent he will be obliged to live in the past; but his constant aim will be to perpetuate the past for the benefit of the present and the future. His concern with fact leads him into minuteness; but it also tends to expand his interpretative attention—still in search of accurate detail and analogy—outward into custom, art, ritual, belief, philosophy, law, society, until the field of literary scholarship becomes rather like Wolf's view of philology arranged in its 24 orders to encompass the whole documentary evidence for the history and antiquities of the ancient world.

Satiric accounts of scholarship usually make fun of the scholar's minuteness; but when scholars talk about each other they tend rather to esteem comprehensiveness. Scaliger said of Casaubon that he was "the most learned of all men living today"; and Casaubon of Scaliger that "there's nothing anybody could want to learn that he couldn't teach; and there was nothing he had read—and what hadn't the man read—that he couldn't instantly recall." No scholar would happily be content to know less than everything; and this is the talk of giants about giants. Not all learned men are accomplished scholars; but any accomplished scholar may, if he decides to give time to the necessary studies, become a learned man. "It is not knowledge but a discipline, that is required," Mark Pattison said a century ago; "not science, but the scientific habit; not erudition, but scholarship."

It is refreshing to revert, if only momentarily, to a time when *science* still meant knowledge and wasn't an emotive signal to fall to secular adoration. It is curious also to remark that scientists are not commonly spoken of as scholars—for all their devotion, their withdrawal from the world, their concern with minutiae; nor have I ever heard a scientist called a pedant, though that on the face of it is surprising enough. All of which suggests that scholarship may have an irreducibly humanistic character.

Scholarly monuments of industry and erudition may seem a modern achievement. But it is well to restore to honour the assiduity and chaste industry of the early scholars—even of the pedants—who secured the make and muscle of the European languages, and preserved those monu-

ments of imagination and thought which are the roots of our literature and civilization. One thinks not only of Petrarch and Erasmus and Scaliger and Casaubon, but also of the ingenious and affectionate searchers out of manuscripts—the papal secretary Poggio Bracciolini, and Gerardo Landriani, and Sir Robert Cotton. One would like to remember even Janus Gruter, who after prodigious labours (not all of them undistinguished) lived to see his private collection of books, and the Palatine Library of which he was curator, despoiled; and Richard Porson whose beautiful handwriting has graced most of the Greek texts printed in England for more than a century. Then there was all the devoted work done at press by Aldus Manutius and Johan Froben and by Schweighaüser and Brunck—and the long sedulous nightmare business of hunting down all the woe of reduplicative error that printing brought into the world with its blessings.

Boethius, "mightiest observer of mighty things," once went (as Helen Waddell has it) "to gather violets in a spring wood, and watched with a sore heart a bird in a cage that had caught a glimpse of waving trees and now grieved its heart out, scattering its seed with small impotent claws." The pedants are perhaps the caged birds, crazy with impotence in the blaze of a knowledge that just eludes their grasp. Scholars for their industry or an air of prodigious but futile effort are often called ants: but I think of them as bees engaged—if I may change the figure—in controlled wool-gathering. For myself, the clearest image of a scholar is set down in a little poem found in a commonplace book at the abbey of Reichenau—written it may be by one of those who, afflicted by *accidia* or the spring weather, drew mice and daffodils in the margins of the manuscript they copied, or wrote out in the secular rhythm verses to celebrate the beauty of some girl's body.

I and Pangur Bán my cat,
'Tis a like task we are at:
Hunting mice is his delight,
Hunting words I sit all night.

'Gainst the wall he sets his eye,
Full and fierce and sharp and sly;
'Gainst the wall of knowledge I
All my little wisdom try.

So in peace our task we ply,
Pangur Bán, my cat, and I;
In our arts we find our bliss,
I have mine and he has his.

This is the scholar's supreme detachment. His pot-valiant conceit and exquisite touchiness may well be only a necessary protection for it. The detachment is essential. Moreover, it places the scholar on the side of the poets, marking him off from mankind at large. So minutely focused upon the task in hand are his concern and affection—his compassion even—that he seems to have none left over for the world; and so he becomes an inexhaustible subject for merriment.

Scholarship, though it requires a scientific habit, is not itself a science. Yet it is too factual, and has too large a responsibility to the past and to a cumulative future, ever to become much unlike a science. It cannot allow conjecture to go far beyond the legitimate establishment of matters of fact; whatever it interprets afresh must be based upon demonstrable evidence rather than upon the self-consistency of plausible speculation or suggestive analogy. Yet no true scholar could conduct his work without an acute critical sense, an exact sense of literary values; he needs a sense of rightness, a flair for judging what fits, what *can* fit, what belongs, what makes sense in a whole context. His criticism may tend to be fixed upon a comparatively limited field of primary material; but the very minuteness of his inquiry draws him towards the deepest and widest resources of information available, towards different kinds of judgment, a most subtle sense of the relatedness of things. Given a text he will probably assume that the author was neither an idiot nor a clown; he will trust first his eyes and his reading of the original; he will not proceed to conjectural alterations until he is forced to do so, taking due account of his own possible ignorance. In the end his labours will come ideally to rest in something definitive: in an unimpeachable text and a commentary that has grown out of the cool sifting and fitting together of all that scholarship can bring to bear in the way of cognate knowledge. "Definitive" suggests a work of such stupendous ingenuity and crushing completeness that nobody need ever in future feel impelled to make such an effort again. One thinks perhaps of the Casaubon *Persius* that Coleridge owned: "There are 616 pages in this volume, of which 22 are text; and 594 commentary and introductory matter." But not all definitive editions are quite so indiscriminately encyclopaedic. In 1912 the Oxford University Press published in two volumes H. J. C. Grierson's edition of *Donne's Poetical Works*, a book of rigorous scholarship in the traditional manner. The text is a type facsimile of the 1633 folio—long *s*'s, ampersands, ligatures, and all; and those who recognize the types will recall how John Fell's arthritic labours in the Sheldonian Theatre founded the tradition of English scholarly printing: "Whereby this Royal Island stands particularly obliged to your Gener-

ous and Publick spirits." Grierson in his commentaries speaks with plangent but unassertive authority, taking on himself no more the colour of ostentation than a mason does in setting the capstone on a wall that has been long building. Grierson sent a copy to Yeats. Yeats's reply is preserved.

> I write to thank you for your edition of Donne. . . . I have been using it constantly and find that at last I can understand Donne. Your notes tell me exactly what I want to know. Poems that I could not understand or could but understand are now clear and I notice that the more precise and learned the thought the greater the beauty, the passion; the intricacy and subtleties of his imagination are the length and depths of the furrow made by his passion. His pedantry and his obscenity—the rock and the loam of his Eden —but make me the more certain that one who is but a man like us all has seen God.

One wonders whether Grierson recognized the poetic flowering of his scholarship in the first work of Yeats's maturity when it appeared in 1914 under the title of *Responsibilities*.

The classical scholarship of the Middle Ages and Renaissance set the pattern that Western scholars in a dreamy sort of way still follow. There have been a few improvements on the fringes of scholarship—machines for collating first folios of Shakespeare, microfilm to ensure a crabbed and myopic ubiquity, stringent procedural rules that inhibit flamboyance but fail to guarantee brilliance. But the touchiness continues, the ant-like industry, the ferocious zeal for fact and accuracy. Indeed, since the invention of printing from movable types, the most ominous change to occur in the pattern of scholarship has been the sudden collapse of classical studies as the central humanistic discipline. This seems to have happened, quite rapidly, about 25 years ago. Suddenly there was a painful academic vacuum, into which the study of English Language and Literature leaked—tentatively at first, and then, since there was no serious discouragement, in full spate. Previously the study of English in the great universities had been a scholarly discipline in linguistics, in grammar, in textual methods. Cultivated people read the corpus of English literature in the dog-watches, a tradition to be seen in the work of such non-professionals as Sherrington, Whitehead, Toynbee, and Trevelyan. As the study of English began to assume—almost by default —the rôle of the main humanistic discipline, professors of English had less the air of gay anti-barbarian champions of the unfettered intellect than of grave gentlemen running in an egg and spoon race. The study of English became the study of "criticism," not as an upsurge of vitality in the body of critical endeavour, but as a condition of survival, as a

responsive mutation in the face of the almost impossible task it had inherited.

Dryden introduced the word *criticism*; Coleridge used it seldom; Arnold canonized it; this century has tried to deify it. Mr. I. A. Richards' early work can be seen as a first strong attempt to stake out the limits and correct dignity for the new intellectual empire, even though his impulse was more clearly psychological and scientific than scholarly and aesthetic. The New Criticism can be seen as one of the first successful attempts (based on Richards) to establish a pedagogic technique that would work in a practical way—in the lecture room. Viewed in this historical perspective, certain subtle and original critics can be seen as consolidating positions held only tentatively by raiding parties and establishing the fact that there were still wider fields to be conquered by "criticism." The advantage to literary studies has been immense, and the advantages to scholarship (as also to journalism) not inconsiderable. But criticism, like any prosperous and aggressive financial concern, has not been innocent of imperial longings. In the general hubbub of empire-building there has been, as one might expect, a certain amount of encroachment, some obliteration of borders. But a much more serious erosion occurred as criticism moved into the position of a world power —the submerging of internal boundaries. At present there is an air of stability, as though people were getting out of the practice of walking away with each other's boundary stones; but that is partly a symptom of exhaustion, and partly a sign that criticism may have forgotten what its empire was meant to do—it may, like other empires one can think of, have slipped into the habit of supposing that empire exists in order to exercise and enjoy the fruits of power. Scholarship has become fustian: criticism is cloth-of-gold. Yet to establish the just limits of a discipline is the first step in commanding that area. In this matter scholarship is the army of occupation. It remains to be seen whether the job of criticism is to provide a ruling caste. Perhaps the figure was not in the first place a happy one. Perhaps what criticism needs is a decent set of working clothes.

Between scholarship and criticism there are some obvious relations. No true scholar can lack critical acumen; and the scholar's eye is rather like the poet's—not, to be sure, "in a fine frenzy rolling," but at least looking for something as yet unknown which it knows it will find, with perceptions heightened and modified by the act of looking. For knowing is qualitative and is profoundly affected by the reason for wanting to know. Again, it is clear that no critic can afford *not* to be a scholar—

even a scholar in a pretty impressive degree—if his work is to go much beyond delicate impressionism, penumbral rhetoric, or marginal schematism. Without scholarship every synoptic view will be cursory, every attempt at a synthesis a wind-egg; without scholarship the criticism of a poem may easily become a free fantasia on a non-existent theme. Yet scholarship invading the field of criticism can hamstring and bird-lime heuristic activity, and frustrate the apprehension of literature by intellectual barbarity and emotional pedantry. It would be a pity to regard scholarship as no more than a mounting-block for the Icarus-flights of criticism; for scholarship represents a contrary and essential moment in the larger rhythmic process of criticism. Criticism and scholarship, though not mutually exclusive, are as different as positive and negative, fiction and fact, theory and myth.

Coleridge in one of his notebooks observed that

> In all processes of the Understanding the shortest way will be discovered the last, and this perhaps while it constitutes the great advantage of having a Teacher to put us on the shortest road at the first, yet sometimes occasions a difficulty in the comprehension—in as much as the longest way is more near to the existing state of the mind, nearer to what, if left to myself on starting the thought, I should have thought next.—The shortest *way* gives *the knowledge* best; the longest way makes me more *knowing*.

If the word *knowing* be taken as a noun rather than as an adjective, it forms an important contrast to *knowledge*: knowledge is terminal, knowing is processive and continuous. If *knowledge* is taken to indicate the whole cumulus of things known, propositions formulated about events, conclusions reached, what was said *about* something, about relations actual, hypothetical, or suggestive, then *knowing* is no more like knowledge than thinking is like a conclusion. There is a terror and fatigue and desolation about sustained thinking that makes one understand why some societies prefer to kill the instigators of thought rather than submit to the solitary humiliation of thinking. Still, thinking can, with luck, application, and practice, be brought to a point; and then it has delights well worth the rigours of the onset. But the elation one feels at reaching a conclusion of any sort or of solving a problem should not be allowed to run over into one's judgment of the value of the conclusion. For in education—in civilization—one is constantly looking for fruitful questions and warily skirting around answers, because an answer brings everything to a halt. The value of a conclusion rests in the indications it gives of fruitful directions for further thinking.

Coleridge in another place says admirably that "there is a period of

orderliness, of circumspection, of discipline, in which we purify, separate, define, select, arrange." Both these phases of heuristic thinking apply to scholarship and to criticism. Since the second phase can easily be regarded as an end, associated with knowledge, it comes to be regarded as the scholar's end. But the business of criticism is to bring the critic—and with luck others—into an initial reflective phase, and to sustain that phase until it is capable of passing over into something more orderly though still circumspect. Criticism, unlike scholarship however, does not come to a halt in the phase of knowledge; it uses each successive phase of knowledge as the beginning of a further reflective phase, a fresh activity of knowing in the presence of the poem. The end of criticism is knowing: the end of scholarship is knowledge. The unpardonable sin in scholarship is to be wrong: one could say that in criticism the unpardonable sin is to be right.

I cannot bring myself to think of criticism as a self-enclosed activity that needs literature only as something to grip its chariot-wheels. It is literature, not criticism, that is apocalyptic; and criticism cannot be driven far beyond the irreducible element of judgment that is to be found in any cognitive process. Criticism is a humble and ancillary occupation, guided, commanded, and humiliated by literature. Its character is functional. Its worth depends upon its usefulness. At the least it is a means of inducing and sustaining reflection; at best it is a mode of illumination, a means of heightening one's awareness of literature so that literature may illuminate. The critic's job is—at the mundane level—sacramental: to establish a direct contact with works of literature, to partake of the life those works encompass and disclose. The critic will talk about that contact, and about what—through that contact—he takes single works of art, and then perhaps groups of works of art, to be. Not least important is it to talk about these things in such a way as to bring others into direct contact with works of literature, with their capacity for astonishment heightened, their perceptions sharpened, their power of discovery unimpaired. I should like to keep this simple function of criticism clear by splitting off from the term at one end everything that belongs in the abstract and speculative domains of poetics and aesthetic theory, and at the other end everything that belongs to scholarship—matters of history, biography, linguistics, psychology, philosophy. So regarded, the critic's position is clearer. He will be less likely, under the pressure of professional importunity, to walk in front of the work of art with a banner flying.

In narrowing the term *criticism* in this way I am not thinking that

criticism should be limited to what Professor Frye has called "public criticism"—the more or less persuasive communication of the "feel" of a poem by a perceptive reader to the public at large. I am thinking of the activity that, in the mind of a "critic," brings a work of literature into a reflective or discursive or imaginative field which is at first in some way related to the work of literature and will in the end be dominated by the work of literature. If the term criticism is allowed to expand indefinitely it comes to include the whole field of mental activity in which may occur any discussion whatsoever of anything even remotely to do with works of literature. In such a dilated and attenuated area the landmarks vanish. Yet one needs constantly to know whether what is thought or said in the name of criticism is illuminating the poem and is controlled by the poem, or whether it is part of an excursus into history, theory of semantics, metaphysics, poetics, psychoanalysis, biography, or even—as when Johnson writes a first-rate essay on a third-rate poem—into imaginative writing.

For the health of literature—and criticism—the most fruitful critical activity is reflective: throwing the mind forward, after withdrawal, refreshed and informed, upon the poem, willing to be dominated by the poem. This movement of mind is rhythmic, passing steadily in and out of resonance with the poem, the need to return to the poem becoming stronger the farther the mind moves away from the poem. The other activities—though legitimate enough, as indeed all modes of knowledge are legitimate—are refractive: they start from a poem but proceed into something else, fostering an allegiance not to the poem —and sometimes not even to literature—but to ideas which were first suggested by contact with the poem and ideas now considered worthy of exploration for their own sake without further reference to the poem. The rhythmic critical activity is capable of being continuously heuristic; it is a process of knowing perpetually destroyed and renovated by contact with the poem. The refractive critical activity terminates in knowledge which may not even be knowledge about the poem, a knowledge in which the mind gratefully comes to rest because it preferred not to come to rest in the poem.

Criticism in this narrow sense is then the functional relation between a reader and a poem; or the functional relation in the mind between the poem and another look at the poem; or the relation between the poem and some other field of interest or activity. So limited, it is a way of mind that could be clearly described both in its functional and its psychological aspects. Since it is an activity without which no recreative

or discursive activity in the field of a poem can relevantly proceed, there would seem to be some advantage in defining it and giving it a name. If we call this perceptive-functional relation *criticism* we shall be at a loss for a general term to do the work now done by the generic term *critical*, and much of the present content of what is fashionably called criticism would be found to belong in the sphere of poetics. Probably it is too late to reverse a linguistic process started long ago and conveniently fortified by collusive erosion of meaning. If a new and strict meaning for an old term cannot be established, a new term may have to be found and set on course between the rock of habit and the whirlpool of jargon. The word *hapsis* might tentatively be suggested. It is not in *N.E.D.* but was not unknown to Aristotle and Plato. The verb from which the noun is formed means to touch, grasp, begin, set to work, perceive, have intercourse with, be in contact with; it can also mean to kindle, to set on fire. Unfortunately the adjective *haptic* is already used by psychiatrists to indicate a kind of distortion that occurs in drawings as an expression of a psychopathic condition; but this may only help to clarify the singular and ambiguous activity in which critics engage.

If a critic is to foster and inhabit the life of literature rather than expend his energies in founding totalitarian states, he will need to be flexible, resourceful, and modest. He might discover that criticism, like art, finds its most trenchant directness not in certainty but in obliquity. He will and must feel free to use a variety of methods, approaches, even techniques—provided he can use these with some air of appropriateness. He will need a full armoury of methods if he is in any way to transcend the limits of his own taste, sympathy, and ignorance. A critic must feel free to change his analogies, his illustrations, his images, his terms; he must even be prepared to change his mind, recalling that only a work of art has a face worth saving.

One of the few things which emerge clearly from the troublesome history of twentieth-century criticism is than any critic who approaches a work of literature with anything less than everything that might be relevant to his inquiry does so at his own peril. At this point the distinction between knowledge and knowing becomes crucial. Knowing is processive: knowledge is terminal. The intrusion of knowledge can easily obscure and arrest the activity of knowing; for it can easily distract attention from what one seeks to know and bring it to fatal rest in the null desert of things known. In the field of scholarship knowledge is paramount: knowledge factual, definitive, cumulative, fully tested on evidence. In the field of criticism, on the contrary, knowing is para-

mount, and ignorance assumes a positive value; and as long as ignorance does not imply complete insensibility, a positive rejection of decisive knowledge becomes a guiding principle. Since a poem is not an encyclopaedic statement of fact, but a symbolic entity, it is ringed about and even shaped by what is not said; by not-knowing, by ignorance, in the same way that the sound and rhythm of a poem is ringed about with silence. It is as important for a critic to be sure what not to know in the presence of a particular poem as it is to know what facts are critically relevant; and even the relevant facts must not, in criticism, be entertained as knowledge, but turned loose to be shaped and controlled or annihilated by the poem. A critic—like a poet—needs not only a method of bringing to bear all knowledge upon a single point but also a method for getting rid of what is not to the point.

There is correspondingly this great difference between scholarship and criticism. In scholarship anything that can be reliably said about anything is a permanent addition to the store of knowledge—even though it be centuries before anybody wants to use it. In criticism anything that can be said about a poem is tentative; and as soon as it ceases to illuminate the poem it must be thrown away or it will confuse or blind the critic. In criticism encyclopaedic knowledge may not be a virtue—it may even be the ultimate barbarity. In scholarship a little criticism goes a long way because there is a constant appeal to verifiable fact, a constant discipline and purging of fantasy in the way that value-judgments retain their essential character of directness. There is no finer training for a critic than that in scholarship, as long as it does not twist him into pedantry. Once the critic steps forth into *his* area of controlled wool-gathering he can learn much from the old scholars who, with their baggy eyes and fur neckpieces, gaze quizzically at him from the engraved title-pages of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. There is at least this virtue in the scholar: he walks *behind* his text, processionally, knowing that the text is the only thing worth preserving. The scholar-critic needs to overcome the impulse to march like a drum-major in front of his text. A man can enjoy literature, he can by grace experience it, he can even make it his own; but try as he will he cannot devour literature, and if he plays his cards right the most he can expect is that poems will have their will of him in the end. If he is to induce knowing he will need wisdom, a light touch, nimble foot-work. The critic can learn at least this from a scholar: that he might do worse than conduct himself with the truculent evasiveness of a lover engaged in a hard courtship; for he has everything to win and only himself to lose.

SWIFT AND THE ANCIENTS-MODERNS CONTROVERSY

Philip Pinkus

There is apparently no question about Swift's loyalties in the Ancients-Moderns controversy; he is considered an Ancient. *The Battle of the Books* and *A Tale of a Tub* seem to demonstrate this unmistakably. But how much an Ancient is he? and of what kind? These are legitimate questions, for when we look closely at Swift's writings we soon realize that the standard definitions of the terms do not fit. In fact, we are no longer sure what an "Ancient" is. The difficulty is in the definitions. In Swift's day "Ancient" and "Modern" were, for the most part, epithets of abuse employed in the heat of controversy, and though they carried a meaning, that meaning was seldom precise. One might even argue that preciseness of meaning comes later, imposed by scholars in search of neat definitions.

The fullest definition of the "Ancient" has been given by Richard Foster Jones in his *Ancients and Moderns: A Study of the Background of the Battle of the Books*,[1] a landmark in seventeenth-century studies. Mr. Jones ranges wide to explain the term. In the universal conflict that has beset all societies, he explains, the Ancient is the conservative and the traditionalist who is opposed to the forces of liberalism and progress.

> The stock arguments of conservatism since the world began appear in the defence of antiquity. We should honor the ancients because they are the fathers of our knowledge and have received the sanction of many ages and of all the universities. We should be slow to discard the findings of civilization. There were an irrational hatred of novelty and an equally irrational love for the old and tried. Individual wits who would pit their own ideas against the tested truth of the past should be curbed in their pride.[2]

Before we can understand Mr. Jones, though, a few questions have to be answered, such as, what is progress? what is conservatism? is conser-

vatism necessarily opposed to progress? and if to be conservative is to be obstinately rooted to the past can we apply this label to Swift, Pope, Arbuthnot, Gay, Parnell or any of the Queen Anne wits, all of whom have been called Ancients? Even if we could answer such questions, Mr. Jones's description of the Ancient is still questionable. Most members of the Royal Society, who were brought up on the classics, would not deny honour to the ancients as "the fathers of our knowledge"—and if anything is Modern it is the Royal Society. If we insist that Swift is an Ancient, an irrational hatred of novelty and an irrational love for the old and tried are characteristics that can hardly be attributed to him. Swift's attitude to the past, it can be shown, was not rigid, and certainly not irrational. We cannot even say that the "wits who would pit their own ideas against the tested truth of the past" are Modern, because if we do, that makes a Modern of Swift. In *A Tale of a Tub*, he partially rejected Plato and Aristotle, and totally rejected Diogenes, Appollonius, and Lucretius.[3] As for the Ancients' caution that one should be slow to discard the findings of civilization, on this point Swift would stand pat—though to know precisely what he is standing on we should have to know how slow is slow.

This is the general part of Mr. Jones's definition. More particularly, Mr. Jones makes the theory of nature's decay the characteristic mark of the Ancient. "Probably no single factor," he says, "was so responsible for the feeling of modern inferiority as the belief that all nature was decaying in its old age. It lay, indeed, at the bottom of most manifestations of the worship of antiquity, though frequently not finding expression in words."[4] And again: "Perhaps, more than we discover in print, this lingering conception of universal decay was at the bottom of the worship of antiquity and the regard for Latin and Greek writers which characterized the criticism of the neo-classical period."[5] Unfortunately, we cannot examine what is not in print, but if we concern ourselves with what is, the problem is easier. In *Gulliver's Travels*, Book III deals most directly with the issue of the Ancients and Moderns, and there Swift attacks the Modern concept of progress, the blind mechanism, the soulless materialism associated with the Royal Society. These are favourite targets of Swift's satire, and in so far as they are Modern, Swift rejects the Moderns. But Swift does not necessarily become an Ancient because he rejects these supposed characteristics of the Royal Society. He is not necessarily fighting the battle of the Ancients and the Moderns. And he is not necessarily upholding the theory of nature's decay because he rejects the theory of progress. In fact, in chapter VIII of Book III Swift

seems to throw out the theory of nature's decay as well. In this chapter Gulliver, given magical insight into the past and having observed past and present, the ancients and the moderns, reaches this conclusion: "How low an opinion I had of human wisdom and integrity, when I was truly informed of the springs and motives of great enterprises and revolutions in the world, and of the contemptible accidents to which they owed their success." In *The Battle of the Books* itself the Ancients advise the Moderns "rather to raise their own side of the Hill, than dream of pulling down that of the Ancients."[6] The inference is that the level of the Ancients might be reached, perhaps even surpassed. Even the Modern William Wotton said no more: "Sir William Temple will certainly agree with me in this Conclusion, that former Ages made greater Orators and nobler Poets than these later ages have done . . . [but] the present Age, with the same Advantages, under the same Circumstances, might produce a "*Demosthenes*, a *Cicero*, a *Horace*, or a *Virgil*. . . ."[7] The theory of nature's decay is obviously inadequate to describe Swift's attitude.

Another part of Mr. Jones's definition is that the Ancients-Moderns controversy represents the struggle between the forces of naturalism and humanism.[8] But when we call humanism a characteristic of the Ancient the picture becomes even more confusing. Mr. Jones uses Milton as an earlier example of the Moderns' protest against the Ancients' domination, and the Latin poem "Naturam non pati senium" as the Modern's denial of the theory of nature's decay. But the man who had dedicated his life and his works to God's service, whose constant theme was that man is responsible for his own deeds because he has a reason, discursive and intuitive, to enable him to choose right from wrong, and a will to act upon his choice, can hardly be a naturalist. John Arbuthnot, Swift's close friend, was a member of the Royal Society and in 1705 even took part in an astronomical project. By the rules he must be a naturalist. Yet he also contributed to the Scriblerus Memoirs[9] and possibly to *The Dunciad*; he enthusiastically received *Gulliver's Travels* —and these works are undeniably humanist. Even Bentley and Wotton, the principal exponents of the Moderns' cause in the historic controversy against Sir William Temple, must be considered humanists, if by humanism we mean an insistence on man's dignity based on the ethical values of the classics. True, their attitude towards the new experimental philosophy and the function of knowledge was different from Swift's—and this is an important difference—and perhaps it makes them less humanistic, but they are humanists nevertheless. The point is that

naturalism and humanism are not always helpful in determining who is a Modern and who an Ancient.

What is left of Mr. Jones's position reduces itself to this. The Renaissance made idols of the ancients, and made their authority dominate English culture. Against this authority there was a continual revolt, because it was felt that insistence on ancient authority stifled modern thought; one looked back rather than ahead. Therefore any attack on this authority, whether it was Milton's poem against nature's decay or Bentley's attack on the Phalaris Epistles (the supposed example of the superiority of ancient literature over modern), was a blow for the moderns. To be a Modern then means to restrict ancient authority in order to free modern thought. To be an Ancient, on the other hand, is to insist on that authority and therefore to restrict modern thought. But if one insists that ancient authority be forever dominant, it can only be because he considers ancient culture to be forever greater than modern culture. That is, he subscribes to the theory of nature's decay. And presumably if he as an Ancient engages in polemics over this issue, for example, the Ancients-Moderns controversy of the 1690's, he must take the stand that Sir William Temple did, that whatever is valuable in man's efforts was performed by the ancients, and that to be modern is to be inferior. But this is precisely not Swift's position. In fact, he made this attitude and the controversy itself a butt for his satire.[10]

What can we conclude from all this? At least, that there is some confusion about what is meant by the terms *Ancient* and *Modern*. A Modern may be humanistic, respect antiquity, admire the classics, and not subscribe to the theory of progress. An Ancient may reject the theory of nature's decay, may not necessarily have an irrational hatred of novelty, and may conceivably admire things modern as well as ancient. This does not mean that there never were Ancients and Moderns. There was, of course, a historic battle between the Ancients and the Moderns, and there was, and still is, a conflict between the humanists and the naturalists. But it is doubtful whether there is a necessary connection between the two conflicts—and it is because scholars have insisted on this connection that all the confusion has come about.[11]

II

The Battle of the Books, where Swift seems to align himself directly with the Ancients in support of his patron Sir William Temple, appears to be Swift's most obvious attack on the Moderns. But if we examine

the text we see that Swift's attitude here is ambivalent. The opening words of the *Battle* set the tone of the entire book: "Whoever examines with due Circumspection into the *Annual Records of Time*, will find it remarked, that *War is the Child of Pride* and *Pride the Daughter of Riches*; the former of which Assertions may be soon granted; but one cannot so easily subscribe to the latter: For *Pride* is nearly related to Beggary and Want. . . . The most antient and natural Grounds of Quarrels, are Lust and Avarice. . . ."[12] This is Swift's introductory comment on the Ancients-Moderns controversy which he is about to discuss. It is followed by a passage even less flattering. The Ancients-Moderns controversy is a quarrel between factious dogs, the mad snarling and grovelling over a piece of bone, the bestial frenzy of pursuing a bitch in heat. In case there was any doubt about the intention of his dog image, Swift adds: "Now, whoever will please to take this Scheme [of dogs], and either reduce or adapt it to an Intellectual State, or Commonwealth of Learning, will soon discover the first Ground of Disagreement between the two great Parties at this Time in Arms; and may form just Conclusions upon the Merits of either Cause. . . . For, the present Quarrel is so enflamed by the warm Heads of either Faction, and the Pretensions *somewhere or other* so exorbitant, as not to admit the least Overtures of Accomodation. . . ."[13] That is, both Ancients and Moderns are factions whose reasoned arguments can be explained most adequately by a close look at the "Republick of Dogs." Swift continues to ridicule both sides of the controversy. "In this Quarrel, whole Rivulets of *Ink* have been exhausted, and the Virulence of both Parties enormously augmented."[14] Again: "And therefore [to avoid controversy] I advised, that the Champions of each side should be coupled together, or otherwise mixt, that like the blending of contrary Poysons, their Malignity might be employ'd among themselves."[15] But this caution was neglected, Swift explains, and it gave rise to the rise to the Battle of the Books, the struggle between the Ancients and the Moderns, the two rival poisons.

In *The Battle of the Books* Swift's sympathies, of course, are with the Ancients, but the point is that he rejects the controversy. His attitude extends beyond it. He seems to suggest that there always has been such a controversy. Aristotle and Duns Scotus "concerted together to seize *Plato* by main Force, and turn him out from his antient Station among the *Divines,* where he had peaceably dwelt near Eight Hundred Years."[16] Does this make Aristotle a Modern? Hardly. Swift places the Ancients on a higher peak than the Moderns. But these peaks are both on the same hill: Parnassus. With effort, Swift suggests, the Moderns

can equal and even surpass the Ancients. In the quarrel between the Bee and the Spider, there is again no question about Swift's preference. The Ancient, the Bee, gets the better of the argument. But the Bee, "grown impatient at so much loss of Time, fled strait away to a bed of Roses, without looking for a Reply."[17] The controversy itself, Swift demonstrates, is a waste of time. We should not trifle over whether or not the Ancients are better than the Moderns, our duty is to pursue sweetness and light—like the bee. The fact that the unsavoury spider is identified with the Moderns, therefore, does not make Swift an Ancient rejecting all Moderns simply because they are modern. The spider's crime is that he profanes the universal values which Swift upholds. Wherever these values are profaned, whether it is in the ancient Epicurus or Alexander the Great,[18] or the modern Bishop Sprat or Henry IV of France,[19] there is Swift's target. The label *Modern*, in these instances, obviously suggests a significance beyond the Ancients-Moderns controversy.

One final point we must consider about *The Battle of the Books*. There seems to be a basic confusion in its conception. On the one hand Swift ridicules the controversy—the image of the battle itself is ridiculous; on the other, the Ancients win a series of victories over the Moderns, and Swift appears to be identifying himself with the details of the controversy. The answer seems to lie in Swift's conflicting purpose. His first aim was to defend Sir William Temple against his opponents and put them in their place. At the same time he felt obliged to ridicule the controversy and keep Temple's ideas at a distance. His main intention was not to show that the Ancients were superior to the Moderns—he was not fighting the battle of the Ancients alongside Temple; it was to give a lesson in manners to Wotton and Bentley, Temple's attackers. If this were not so, there would be no point in Swift's devoting fully half of the actual battle to the characters of Boyle, Wotton, Bentley, and Temple. The defeat of Bentley and Wotton was not intended to demonstrate the Ancients' superiority but to assert Temple's dignity and to ridicule his enemies.

The privilege of scoffing at Temple, however, Swift seemed to reserve for himself. In the "Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," the essay which set off the Ancients-Moderns controversy in England, Temple wrote:

> What are become of the Charms of Musick, by which Men and Beasts, Fishes, Fowls, and Serpents were so frequently Enchanted, and their very Natures changed; By which the Passions of Men were raised to the greatest

heighth and malice, and then as suddenly appeased, so as they might be justly said to be turned into Lyons or Lambs, into Wolves or into Harts, by the Power and Charms of this admirable Art? . . . 'Tis argued by the Learned that the Science of Musick, so admired of the Ancients, is wholly lost in the World . . . So as those Two Divine Excellencies of Musick and Poetry are grown in a manner to be little more, but the one Fiddling, and the other Rhyming.[20]

Temple's enthusiasm for ancient music is strangely echoed in the words of that great exponent of the Ancients' cause, Cornelius Scriblerus (*The Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus*):

How can you dignify (quoth he) this modern fiddling with the name of Musick? Will any of your best Hautboys encounter a Wolf now-a-days with no other arms but their instruments, as did that ancient Piper Pythocaris? Have ever wild Boars, Elephants, Deer, Dolphins, Whales or Turbotts, shew'd the least emotion at the most elaborate strains of your modern Scrapers, all which have been as it were tam'd and humaniz'd by ancient Musicians? . . . Whence proceeds the degeneracy of our Morals? Is it not from the loss of ancient Musick, by which (says Aristotle) they taught all the Virtues?[21]

The similarity of the two passages is surely more than a coincidence, especially since the satiric norm of the Scriblerus Memoirs is not Cornelius, or his son Martinus, but his brother Albertus, who "was a discreet man, sober in his opinions, clear of Pedantry, and knowing enough both in books and in the world, to preserve a due regard for whatever was useful or excellent, whether ancient or modern."[22] If Swift did not write this parody of his former patron it must have been written with his connivance. We can hardly conclude, therefore, that Swift is as thoroughgoing an Ancient as Sir William Temple. In fact, when we couple this ridicule with the textual evidence of *The Battle of the Books*, the conclusion can only be that Swift rejected Temple's cause, the cause of the Ancients, from the time of his earliest writings.

III

Swift seemed to use the Ancients-Moderns controversy when it suited his satiric purpose. It was a convenient instrument, particularly in *A Tale of a Tub*. But he was no more interested there than in *The Battle of the Books* in showing that Ancients were superior to Moderns. When we discover, then, that the *Tale's* satiric targets are labelled *Modern*, that Swift has caught some of the controversial flavour of the historic quarrel, we must set this against the facts that Swift's attitude towards the quarrel

is not sympathetic and that his conception of "Modern" extends beyond the controversy and is in the tradition of earlier satire. Even in Swift's attack on "modern" literature we do not have to look to the controversy for his precedent. Swift was as much influenced by the Duke of Buckingham's *Rehearsal* as by the literary battle between the Ancients and the Moderns. The chief satiric device of *The Rehearsal* is Bayes, the mad hack author, who sums up in his own person all the modern folly that Buckingham attacks; and Bayes's rehearsal of his most modern play accompanied by his modern comments on how such plays should be written forms the substance of Buckingham's burlesque. In *A Tale of a Tub* there is also a hack author, Swift's *persona*, who is the chief satiric device; he also is the dramatic expression of all that is modern—the metaphoric butt of the satire. And Swift's hack is not just figuratively mad, like Buckingham's, he is literally so, as we discover in section IX. Swift's hack, though, does not have a play to rehearse; he tells a "tale of a tub," a most modern tale, intruding long modern digressions on how tales should be told and how critics should criticize. On one level Buckingham was attacking the heroic drama of the period and its chief exponent, Dryden, who in the figure of Bayes was the hero of the burlesque. Swift's target is not as specific. But it is significant that for Swift, too, Dryden becomes the main example of modern literature. (By the time *A Tale of a Tub* was written Tom Brown had made almost a satiric tradition of Dryden as Bayes, the supremely modern hack author.[23])

More generally, Buckingham was attacking the irresponsible use of the imagination in literature, the emphasis on form rather than substance, on elaboration and surprise for their own sake, on dullness and nonsense, rather than common sense and the imitation of nature:

> JOHNS: . . . But why two kings of the same place?
> BAYES: Why, because it's new; and that's it I aim at. I despise your Johnson, and Beaumont, that borrowed all they writ from Nature: I am for fetching it purely out of my own fancy, I. [II, i, 65 ff.]

Here is the substance of Buckingham's attack. The final virtue of Bayes's play is that it begins and ends without ever opening the plot at all. "What the devil is a plot for," says Bayes, "but to bring in fine things!"—fine things such as similies and rants and ghosts and songs and dances. All these novelties were supposedly represented in the figure of Dryden, who at the time (1671) had already written *The Indian Emperor*, *Tyrannic Love*, and *The Conquest of Granada*. What Buckingham found in Dryden's heroic drama, Swift found in the literary bag-

gage of prefaces and dedications which Dryden employed.[24] Both writers extended their attack to the more general target of modern literature. The seemingly aimless structure of *A Tale of a Tub*, its digressions, its overwhelming prefatory machinery, its continual emphasis on form rather than substance, on the externals rather than the essence, on novelty as an end in itself, on the mechanical contrivances for wit and learning, all this was anticipated in Buckingham's *The Rehearsal*. But Buckingham was not interested in demonstrating that ancient civilization was superior to modern, even though he was attacking an aspect of modern literature. In fact, the Ancients-Moderns controversy in English literature did not begin, according to R. F. Jones, until the 1690's, long after Buckingham wrote *The Rehearsal*. The conclusion, then, seems clear: attacking modern literature does not necessarily make one a party to the controversy.

Nor do we have to confine ourselves to Buckingham and the *Rehearsal* tradition to find the satiric pattern for Swift's attack on modern literature. We can turn to Samuel Butler, who also attacked the heroic drama in his "Repartee between Cat and Puss: At a Caterwauling in the Modern Heroic Way." Was Butler also an Ancient attacking the pernicious Moderns? This is hard to believe, and particularly so since Ricardo Quintana calls Butler a Modern[25]—a further illustration of the confused use of these terms.

Another field of modernism which Swift satirized was the new philosophy of the Royal Society. Here he seems much more obviously within the bounds of the Ancients-Moderns controversy as described by R. F. Jones: Swift's attack on the Royal Society, humanism opposing naturalism, has been directly identified as an Ancient's attack on the Moderns. It is therefore all the more important to recognize the breadth of Swift's attack at this point. His satire is based on a tradition that can be traced back to Lucian. We find it in the Middle Ages, in the alchemist and his confidence tricks, his pedantry, his fatuous pursuit of the unattainable to the exclusion of utility and common sense. We find it in the Renaissance burlesque of scholastic learning and pedantry, in Rabelais, in Johnson, and in Butler. In fact, in Butler's Sir Hudibras—Presbyterian, pedant, mathematician, school divine, and philosopher; in Ralph, the squire—Independent, and proud possessor of the inner light; and in Sidrophel, the embodiment of pseudo-science—quack, Rosicrucian, astrologer, magician, physiologist, horoscopist, and follower of Paracelsus Bombastus—we have almost the basis of Swift's satire in *A Tale of a Tub*. The quack scholar is a universal target that takes on a new shape

in every age. We do not have to turn to the Ancients-Moderns controversy to justify the satire.

There is not space in this article to go into the religious aspects of the *Tale*. But only by a strange extension of the Ancients-Moderns controversy can Swift's attack on Puritanism and Catholicism, in a satiric tradition going back to Elizabethan times, be considered an Ancient's attack on Modern vice. R. F. Jones makes the Puritans Modern by identifying them with the excessive utilitarianism of the proposed University reforms, and linking them with the Royal Society experiments. But it is the Puritan religion that Swift attacks in the *Tale*, not its secular activities; and Swift attacks Roman Catholicism as well, which is even more difficult to relate to the Moderns. The fact that all these elements—literature, learning, virtuoso experiments, religion—are referred to as "modern" in *A Tale of a Tub* does not, therefore, confine "modernism" to the immediate, topical bounds of the Ancients-Moderns controversy, but points to a world of associations beyond.

Yet it may be argued that the various traditions suggested above as Swift's sources merely provided ready ammunition for Swift as Temple's champion in the historic controversy. To answer this objection we must turn to section V of the *Tale*. Only a "certain Author called Homer," Swift's *persona* the hack points out, has ever approached the sublime heights of *A Tale of a Tub*. But Homer has so many errors and omissions that one can hardly call his work "a compleat Body of all Knowledge, Human, Divine, Political, and Mechanick" as, presumably, one may call the *Tale*. The hack acknowledges Homer to be the inventor of the compass and gunpowder, and the discoverer of the circulation of the blood—generally conceded to be the supreme achievements of Modern inventiveness—but in all his writings he has no complete account of the spleen; his dissertation on tea is unsatisfactory; and as for his method of salivation without mercury, the remedy for that most modern amusement, the pox, it is not be relied on.[26] In this passage, the satire moves in two directions, first, against the antiquarians who find in Homer and the ancients all knowledge and all beauty; second, against the Moderns who find in the ancients almost nothing at all. Swift is taking the hallowed materials of the controversy to laugh both sides out of Court. In a sense, the antiquarians may be called Modern because they are associated with the Royal Society (although many antiquarians, Temple, for example, were not). Swift calls them "modern"; but in saying this we must remember what he means by the term. It is obviously not the modernism that Temple tilts at. Swift is attacking

extremes, whether they are Modern or Ancient, because extremes represent unreason. He makes Rymer a satiric target in the *Tale* not because he is a Modern in the narrow sense, or simply because he is a critic, but because he is too absorbed in the rules and models of the ancients. (Here also Samuel Butler provides a satiric precedent in his "On Critics: Who Judge of Modern Plays Precisely by the Rules of the Ancients"; a literary controversy about Ancients and Moderns written before Temple's quarrel and even before the quarrel of Perrault and Fontenelle, the earlier French counterpart of the Ancients-Moderns controversy. To Swift, therefore, even following the ancients is modern. And this is a use of the term which obviously has no relation to the historic controversy. In fact, to be an Ancient or a Modern in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was to be a stock target of the satirists. Tom Brown in his *Amusements* sums up the prevailing attitude of the wits on the Ancients and Moderns: "In another apartment was a curious collection of contemplative gentlemen . . . arguing about the merits of different systems. If any one ask me which of these disputants has reason on his side, I will say that some of them have the reason of antiquity, others the reason of novelty; and in matter of opinion, these two reasons have a greater influence upon the learned than reason itself."[27] To make Swift an Ancient is to make him the butt of his own satire.

Swift's attack on modernism, then, is not the attack of the Ancient against the Modern. He is not the arch-conservative who can brook no change, condemning all modernity because it is new. He is the gentleman and man of taste, the humanist and man of religion, the man of abundant sense who attacks whatever he considers to be a breach of his essentially moral and religious standard. Seeing in his own society tendencies which he felt would destroy the values giving dignity to man, he naturally focused his attack on his own society where it might serve some purpose —and this naturally suggested the term *modern*, as it did to Butler and Buckingham before him. But essentially Swift's satire is a universal attack directed against a universal target.

The conclusion may not bring us any closer to understanding what kinds of creature are Ancients and Moderns, but that is because they seem to take on different meanings in different contexts. To build from these shifting meanings a monolithic theory, such as R. F. Jones's description of the Ancients-Moderns controversy, and to expect this theory to apply to every allusion to the terms in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, is to ignore the facts of history.

NOTES

1 Jones, *Ancients and Moderns* ("Washington University Studies, Language and Literature," n.s., No. 6) (St. Louis, 1936).

2 *Ibid.*, 152–3.

3 Jonathan Swift, *A Tale of a Tub, to which is added The Battle of the Books*, ed. A. C. Guthkelch and D. Nichol Smith (Oxford, 1920), 166. I should add Epicurus here but Mrs. Miriam Koch Starkman (*Swift's Satire on Learning* in *A Tale of a Tub* [Princeton, 1950], 34) insists that for all practical purposes Epicurus is Modern. In attacking "philosophical Epicureanism," she implies, Swift is the orthodox Ancient rejecting the Modern—which is in no way inconsistent with Sir William Temple's admiration of Epicurus, because that is "literary Epicureanism." This is an ingenious way of keeping Swift an Ancient in good standing. But the point is that Swift did not adopt Temple's position, and so one can still say that when he felt it necessary he pitted his own ideas against the past and did not have an "irrational love for the old and tried."

4 Jones, *Ancients and Moderns*, 23.

5 *Ibid.*, 42.

6 Guthkelch and Smith ed., 221.

7 William Wotton, "Reflections upon Ancient and Modern Learning," *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. J. F. Spingarn (Oxford, 1909), 213. From Wotton's position we can see that the corollary of the theory of nature's decay, the theory of progress, which is supposedly characteristic of the Modern (*see* Starkman, *Swift's Satire*, 8), no more applies to every Modern than the opposite theory to every Ancient. By admitting that modern literature is inferior to ancient, the Modern must admit also that progress is not inevitable.

8 Jones, *Ancients and Moderns*, 282.

9 See *Memoirs of the Extraordinary Life, Works, and Discoveries of Martinus Scriblerus*, ed. Charles Kerby-Miller (New Haven, 1950). Mr. Kerby-Miller quotes a letter from Swift testifying to the importance of Arbuthnot's rôle in the *Memoirs*; and one of the main purposes of the *Memoirs* was to ridicule the extreme position of the Ancients.

10 Another definition of the Ancient was attempted by Mrs. Miriam Starkman in her interesting study of *A Tale of a Tub*. Mrs. Starkman's definition, however, is denotative. She merely describes Swift's position in the *Tale* and says, in effect, "That is an Ancient." There is nothing wrong with this method of defining an Ancient, providing, of course, one is sure beforehand what an Ancient is. The point of this paper is that one cannot be sure. And about Swift there is reasonable doubt that he is an Ancient.

11 Mr. Aubrey Williams, in *Pope's Dunciad* (Baton Rouge, 1955), 104 ff., suggests that the Ancients-Moderns controversy is perennial. "To use the words 'ancient' and 'modern' is, in fact, to risk a blurring of the issues, for the terms too often appear to restrict the strife to a certain period of time—the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries." The controversy, he argues, is a manifestation of the struggle between the two disciplines of rhetoric and dialectic. "Set in the light of these disciplines, the controversy between the Ancients and Moderns, between Pope and Swift and the dunces, will begin to

appear, in some respects, as a resumption, or continuation, of the controversies between the Sophists and Plato, between Cicero and the philosophers, between the humanists and the schoolmen, between the poets and the virtuosi of the seventeenth century."

12 Guthkelch and Smith ed., 217–18.

13 *Ibid.*, 218.

14 *Ibid.*, 221–2.

15 *Ibid.*, 224.

16 *Ibid.*, 223.

17 *Ibid.*, 233.

18 *Ibid.*, 170.

19 *Ibid.*, 163.

20 Temple, "Essay upon the Ancient and Modern Learning," in *Critical Essays of the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Spingarn, 56.

21 *Martinus Scriblerus*, ed. Kerby-Miller, 115.

22 *Ibid.*, 113.

23 See Tom Brown's "The Reasons of Mr. Bayes Changing his Religion" (1688); "The Reasons of Mr. Joseph Haines: The Player's Conversion and Reconversion" (1690); "The Reasons of the New Convert's Taking the Oaths to the Present Government" (1691).

24 In the table of contents of John Dryden's translation of *The Works of Virgil, Containing His Pastorals, Georgics and Aeneid* (London, 1697), there are 16 entries of dedications, prefaces, commendatory verses, notes, texts, postscripts, etc.

25 Ricardo Quintana, "Samuel Butler: A Restoration Figure in a Modern Light," *ELH*, XVIII (1951), 7–13.

26 Guthkelch and Smith ed., 127–29.

27 Tom Brown, *Amusements Serious and Comical and Other Works*, ed. Arthur L. Hayward (London, 1927), 77.

BAUDELAIRE • *A. E. Carter*

Tu m'as donné ta boue, et j'en ai fait de l'or.
("Epilogue à la ville de Paris")

The Boulevard Richard Lenoir, between the Bastille and the Place de la République, is a typical piece of Baron Haussmann's town planning. Before the 1850's it was the St. Martin canal, joining the Seine to the network of waterways that spreads over northern France. But the Baron, with his eye for the useful and the agreeable, dropped the level by a fathom or two, vaulted it over, and planted trees and fountains on an esplanade in the middle. What had been an incongruous bit of Holland in the heart of Paris became a uniform boulevard, designed for the long parades of carriages and the swishing crinolines of the Second Empire. The quarter is commercial nowadays (warehouses, small shops) and during most of the year offers little of interest. The monotonous façades have become dirty with the passage of a hundred years. Trucks unload merchandise at the curbs, the 69 bus from Père Lachaise snorts by, a few nursemaids and their charges sit on the benches or play in the gravel around the fountains. The plane-trees are pale; they bud late and lose their leaves early; they have a sulky look, as if they knew that their roots were allotted only a meagre ration of earth between the asphalt and Haussmann's cantilevers. It is one of those places one goes through to get somewhere else.

Yet twice a year there is a change. In autumn, when the sunlight has a cold edge and Paris takes on a violet haze, or during the first fine days of spring, with their smell of the river and warm stone, the esplanade is covered with an irregular line of wood and canvas booths. One has to fight one's way through a crowd; there is a reek of garlic and hot oil from the fried-potato stands, mixed with vanilla from cauldrons where almonds are dipped in sugar. The Foire à la Ferraille is in session. It lasts a week, from Sunday to Sunday. And while the word means literally old iron, old iron is only one of the things you can buy there. Most of

the dealers from the big flea-market at Clignancourt have stands, and drive into Paris with truckloads of assorted rubbish. The city, like a great snake, has been shedding its skin for centuries; and for centuries the little deposit has been gathered up from clearance projects, bankruptcies, estates in liquidation, garbage tins; gathered up and sold at the Foire. The results are spectacular—a sermon, in moth-eaten finery and chipped bric-à-brac, on the vanity of human affairs. Like prehistoric saurians in river mud, ten thousand households have dropped their remains here: bedroom crockery, old silver, burnt-out stoves, feather boas and ostrich-feather fans, clocks, mahogany door-knobs, chandeliers, bundles of rusty keys. The variety is infinite. If some member of the family was a globe trotter or a colonial servant, there will even be a thin oriental sediment—the carved tusks and Benares brass for which people used to haggle among the flies and strange accents of souks and bazaars from Port Said to Hong Kong. But variety is not the only fascination of the Foire. The form, the design of all these objects—that, perhaps, is what keeps one longest at the booths, or kneeling in front of the oddments laid out on a worn strip of carpet. A clock is an Etruscan tomb of black marble, or a bronze globe upon which a bronze Napoleon rests his feet in meditation. A hat-rack becomes a swirl of gilded metal ending in a mermaid; a gas fixture is a smirking brass lady, emerging coyly from a tangle of bullrushes. The Foire à la Ferraille is not just a deposit of junk: the junk is of a very special kind—so massive, so elaborate that it can scarcely be called junk, rather a social and political phenomenon, the proof and illustration of a state of mind and a way of life. For this disparate rubbish, pawed over by the dealers and their clients beneath the dusty plane-trees, is nothing less than the wreckage of the nineteenth century, tossed up on the shores of the Boulevard Richard Lenoir like the spars and driftwood of some prodigious marine disaster—an enduring revelation of the tastes, fashions, and manias of the giant among centuries.

A mass of junk: the ebb and flow of time has not yet gnawed it down to that spare and tragic beauty which only retrospect can give. Other centuries, such as the eighteenth, have long since assumed, if not their true, then their most significant, aspect—have become historic, in other words. But our vision of the nineteenth century is still obstructed by the antimacassar and the whatnot, the needle-case and the silver-backed hairbrush. We have all known people to whom such things were not bizarre curiosities but instruments of daily living; sometimes we even possess samples ourselves, handed down or bequeathed, which we dis-

play on our dressing-tables or hide in the attic. Yet from this curious mixture of the grandiose and the trivial, the splendid and the shabby, sprang many things which still enchant us, and notably the poetry of Baudelaire. His life, 1821–67, spans what is in many ways the nineteenth century's core, the years when it evolved, dropped the dead limbs of the past, and became that historical entity we call "Nineteenth Century." Baudelaire was born in the reign of Louis XVIII, when the *ancien régime* and the Revolution were still potent memories, and lived to within three years of the Third Republic. His contemporaries were President Lincoln and Mr. Disraeli, Louis Philippe, Florence Nightingale, and Napoleon III; he grew to maturity under the July Monarchy and wrote and died during the Second Empire; he wore the stove-pipe hat and frock coat of the period, dressed his mistresses in crinolines, and watched them waltzing to the music of Strauss and Offenbach. It is all a dead world now, much further from us in spirit than the mere distance in time would seem to indicate. We can measure the gap as we walk through the Foire à la Ferraille, turning over gilt mirrors and gasoliers and paper-weights. And the fact that Baudelaire's work is now so relished—the fact that poetry which is still not merely read but extravagantly praised could have been written by this child of an age that seems more remote from us than the boudoirs of La Dubarry—is one of the curiosities of literary history. For while many writers have been neglected by their contemporaries and appreciated later on, very few have been appreciated as we now appreciate Baudelaire. We call him a "modern" poet, sometimes even "*the* modern poet"; and the definition, given the circumstances, certainly has few parallels. No volume of verse published in 1757 would have been called "modern" a century later, or indeed a good many years before.[1]

The reasons for some of this posthumous glory are obvious enough. Baudelaire had, of course, great talent in the technical sense, the ability to write mere "poetry." But it would be rash to maintain that he was more endowed in this respect than his contemporaries—when they were Hugo, Musset, Vigny, and Leconte de Lisle. He differed from them, and that is all. Since many of us prefer his poetry to theirs, it is interesting to know how he differed. If we read criticism of his work produced at any time within the last sixty or seventy years, we find that, along with his modernism, it was especially his novelty which struck his admirers: he was hailed as a "poète nouveau" who had produced a "poésie nouvelle." What was this "new" poetry? The subject is odiously hackneyed: Baudelaire introduced the theory of *correspondances* into poetry and

with it new techniques employing verbal harmonies, colours, perfumes; and thus he was the founder of the Symbolist school. None of this seems very thrilling nowadays, partly because later poets (Verlaine, Mallarmé, Laforgue, Rimbaud) carried the new technique further than did Baudelaire, partly because, despite this great "reform," French verse at the end of the century was no better than it was at the beginning, in fact, rarely as good. To found a school of poetry is no sound claim to glory—Marino also founded a school. And anyone who has had to read systematically the works of Baudelaire's minor disciples, such as Samain, Ghil, and Kahn, where the Baudelairean paraphernalia is used and re-used to the point of nausea, finds himself regretting that Baudelaire ever invented this particular kind of novelty. The truth of the matter is that Baudelaire's theories, like all poetic theories, are unimportant; their value lies solely in the way he used them to produce verse which we like better than poetry written at the same time, even when it was composed by men whose talents certainly equalled his.

Baudelaire had a keen ear for the musical possibilities of French, the keenest since Racine's, perhaps; and this influenced his writing in a number of ways. There is first a marked drop in key. Much of his poetry is almost conversational, spoken rather than declaimed:

> Si, par une nuit bleue et froide de décembre,
> Je la trouvais tapie en un coin de ma chambre,
> Grave, et venant du fond de son lit éternel
> Couver l'enfant grandi de son oeil maternel,
> Que pourrais-je répondre à cette âme pieuse,
> Voyant tomber les pleurs de sa paupière creuse?

Is it possible to imagine that written in the Romantic style of Baudelaire's day? Owing to its Latin origins, French verse, both classical and Romantic, has always been rhetorical; the poet is on a platform, addressing an audience, whether he slanders Napoléon le Petit or describes a broken heart. Baudelaire is an exception. While there is some rhetoric in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, it is very low-pitched, so low-pitched that we can scarcely hear it. And we find this very much to our taste. Our modern sensibility does not take kindly to the grand manner; our blood and nerves are not rich enough for declamation: it wearies us, and makes us self-conscious. We prefer Baudelaire because he seldom raises his voice. As Gide said, it is because he speaks in a low tone that we listen to him longest. It might even be said that his style is the best of nineteenth-century French poetry—a perfect equilibrium between Romantic exuberance and Symbolist refinement. If Hugo now seems bombastic, there are times when

Verlaine is too plaintive and attenuated, and Mallarmé too hermetic and sterile.

Baudelaire's interest in musical effects goes much deeper than a skilful juggling with verbal harmonies. His best poems in this style ("Le Jet d'eau," "Le Balcon," "Harmonie du soir") are, like music itself, more suggestive than definite. Their meaning is not confined within the limitations of idea and expression; behind the precision of the form there is a wide region hinted at rather than described, a whole universe of associations in which a reader can lose himself indefinitely. Like Chopin's nocturnes, such poems are evocations rather than statements, and in this field Baudelaire is pretty well unrivalled. This evocativeness is the source of the curiously obsessive quality of his verse, which makes short poems (and all his poems are short) seem long. Before Baudelaire's time nobody made an attempt at this effect, or made it less successfully, and afterwards, as in Verlaine and Samain, the verbal side of the matter is carried to such a point as to give harmony and little else.

The mystic tone of *Les Fleurs du Mal* is another point that has been much stressed; so much, in fact, that, with the aid of the *Journaux intimes*, it is frequently the only side of Baudelaire that is discussed at all. The whole question, I think, should be treated very cautiously. Mysticism, when Baudelaire began to write, had been a standard literary ingredient for over forty years. Ever since its beginnings in Chateaubriand, Romanticism had a mystic tinge, a tendency to trifle about in churches and dabble with holy water. There was much talk about confessionals, Madonnas, God, and the Devil long before Baudelaire was born. Yet his religiosity has been seized upon as though it were unique, seized upon and exaggerated until we have had Catholic and even Jansenist Baudelaires these past twenty-five years. It is becoming fashionable to write about him as though he were one of the Fathers of the Church. This type of criticism seems to me quite absurd. It could end by making Baudelaire as conventionally dull as Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, and fossilizing one of the least static writers who ever existed.[2]

Fortunately for Baudelaire's future popularity it will always be difficult to present him in an orthodox light—at least as long as sexual promiscuity, various perversions, and overindulgence in drugs and alcohol are considered undesirable amusements. Baudelaire was haunted all his life by the forbidden, and so much the better for him! He was one of those unquiet spirits who are always straying from the highway of convention. He never could conform—either to the official rationalism of his time or to the official orthodoxy demanded by the Church. This

obsession is one of the reasons why we still read him, and it is probably one of the reasons why he will always be read. His poetry was written "in the midst of life"; he was fascinated by the brilliant and appalling spectacle of the world, and fascinated not as a detached and Olympian judge, like Hugo and Vigny, but as an actor, a victim, a hero of the drama. His poetry springs from direct experience; and for all his erudition, which was considerable, he is one of the least bookish of poets. It is amusing to find M. Sartre attacking him for his moral paralysis and his weakness. Of course he was weak, when confronted with his stepfather's military arrogance and Jeanne Duval's squalid lies. And then? His failure as a man had a great deal to do with his success as a poet. If he had been able to regulate his finances profitably and drop a worthless mistress back into the gutter where he found her, he would not have been Baudelaire, and he would not have written *Les Fleurs du Mal*. He might instead have written something like M. Sartre's *Chemins de la liberté*, in which case his work would now be slumbering undisturbed in the stacks of the Bibliothèque Nationale, where that immense stodge will undoubtedly be reposing a half-century hence.

Baudelaire's very lack of fixed ideas and settled convictions, his tendency to lose himself in inextricable situations until he had sucked the last drop of bitterness from them, explains his attraction. One's own despair will always find an echo in Baudelaire; he will sympathize, but will not judge. He does not force one to accept a complicated apparatus of beliefs and prejudices before one can understand him. Had he been either a thorough-going agnostic or a convinced Catholic he would be infinitely less moving; but he was equally distant from both scepticism and Revelation. He was not a Voltairean, but he was far, very far, from being a good son of the Church. His life and works are there to prove it.

To see how ill he fits the Catholic pattern we need merely imagine him in an orthodox age, such as the seventeenth century. He would have been a Théophile de Viau, in constant danger of excommunication or the stake; he would have written fewer poems like "Bénédiction" and many more like "Les Promesses d'un visage" and "Le Rêve d'un curieux." He had a wide knowledge of erotica (Diderot, Nerciat, Laclos, De Sade)—he enjoyed reading it; and he was well acquainted with some of the shadiest dives of Paris. He sought much more in the big city than vice, but he sought vice too; and whatever quotations of a "moral" nature may be found in his diaries and letters, *Les Fleurs du Mal* will always smack of forbidden fruit. They would not be *Les Fleurs du Mal* else. Artist as he was, he was quite capable of using Christian symbolism to throw vice

and crime into higher relief. His religious convictions were uncertain and fluctuating, like those of his age. At times he was a complete unbeliever, and he never frequented churches with any assiduity, except to admire the architecture. It would be interesting to know how many times during his adult life he took Communion and went to confession. I make the suggestion simply because, if we believed a lot of modern writing on the subject, we should see him as a kind of lay monk, with his nose in a volume of Eusebius and his fingers in the holy water stoup. His knowledge of doctrine was no greater than what might be derived from an ordinary Catholic upbringing, extended in later years by readings of a mystical cast such as the works of Swedenborg, Tertullian, and Edgar Alan Poe—none of them very sound from the point of view of doctrine.

As for the Jansenist tone one finds here and there in Baudelaire's work, and about which so much nonsense has been written, its source is easier found in the tradition of French literature itself than in what has been called his "Jansenist childhood."[3] Nobody who studies French literature, particularly the great seventeenth-century school, can avoid admiring the austere heroes of Port Royal, especially when their ideas are presented in such masterpieces as *Phèdre* and *Les Pensées*. And Baudelaire found this intransigent theology particularly seductive for another reason: it corresponded admirably to the disgust his penetrating mind felt when confronted with the humanitarian drivel and wishful thinking of so much nineteenth-century utopianism and progressive theory. He believed because his age disbelieved; his faith was a negative reaction, the result of a dilemma. The period was officially rationalist; religion was a matter of good works or a comfortable panacea to justify self-indulgence. The idea of good had obscured the idea of evil. Baudelaire saw quite clearly the results of this—a wishy-washy sentimentality which was the worst possible atmosphere for poetry. He realized that most great verse is religious, not in a narrow doctrinal sense, but inasmuch as it views man in a metaphysical light and attempts to fix his relationship to good and evil. It must have drama, and evil is the greatest drama of all.

Here, however, Baudelaire came up against a difficulty: he was never quite sure that he believed in evil, much as he wanted to. There is a certain amount of pose in his attitude; he often uses metaphysics indiscriminately. Woman as a Temptress may be a striking figure; but when she is always a Temptress—or what is a variation of the same thing, an immaculate Madonna—she begins to look like a piece of highly coloured stage scenery. There is too much of this kind of painted cardboard in

Les Fleurs du Mal. Baudelaire threw away the conventional symbols of nineteenth-century progress, and quite rightly, since most of them were shams. But unfortunately he lacked the ability to invent something convincing to put in their place. He went back to the no less conventional symbols of early Romanticism—devils, succubi, Fatal Women—in which, for all his determination, he was much too intelligent to really believe. The results are not always satisfactory. There is often a startling discrepancy between the profound significance of his poems and the technique (ideas and imagery) he uses to express it, and some of his finest work is irreparably damaged as a result. This is true of "Le Voyage." It is one of the best poems in *Les Fleurs du Mal*, symphonic in conception, and filled with splendid lines:

> Berçant notre infini sur le fini des mers. . . .
>
> Ils s'enivrent
> D'espace et de lumière et de cieux embrasés. . . .
>
> La Curiosité nous tourmente et nous roule,
> Comme un Ange cruel qui fouette des soleils. . . .
>
> L'Homme, dont jamais l'espérance n'est lasse,
> Pour trouver le repos court toujours comme un fou. . . .

Baudelaire seldom wrote better. Yet the poem leaves, somehow, a disappointing impression, falls short of what it promised. This failure, I believe, results directly from Baudelaire's rather artificial metaphysics. He tells us that the main thing one discovers during life's voyage is "le spectacle ennuyeux de l'immortel péché," and further narrows it down to mere sexual sin. In the splendid context of marine horizons and sumptuous adventure, this conclusion is almost ludicrously weak, dragged in peevishly, at all costs, for no other purpose than to scandalize the nineteenth-century believers in progress, and, what is much more serious, without any real conviction on Baudelaire's part. For how can he, with his penetrating intelligence and his profound knowledge of the human heart, have seriously held to such a simplified morality? We need merely look through the rest of his work to see that he found much more during his life's voyage than "sin." Had he not, we should scarcely be reading him today. Moreover, after taking up this rigorous Augustinian stand, he is unable to sustain it. It bores him, and he shrugs off the whole matter in the final lines by demanding not absolution, but "something new," even if he has to die to get it. To believe in sin and then ask nothing from Death but novelty is worse than inconsistent, it is flippant.

There is a smart touch about "Le Voyage" which, while it certainly avoids the pomposity of other writing of the period (and that is something) weakens an otherwise admirable poem. Of the same order are the "shocking" passages which occur here and there in *Les Fleurs du Mal*:

> Les yeux étaient deux trous, et du ventre effondré
> Les intestins pesants lui coulaient sur les cuisses,
> Et ses bourreaux, gorgés de hideuses délices,
> L'avaient à coups de bec absolument chatré.

Such lines no longer appear atrocious, merely dull. We have had so much worse since! Nothing dates faster than the horrible. Balzac says somewhere that bread and water are the only two things we never tire of because they are tasteless; and while some spice is frequently indispensable in literary cookery, it must be admitted that Baudelaire often used it very clumsily. Of course we excuse his mistakes, but mistakes they remain.

Fortunately, if the "shocking" Baudelaire must be dismissed as an authentic child of late Romanticism, in the line of the Borels and O'Neddys, the metaphysical Baudelaire, despite occasional lapses, managed to turn his interest in evil to good poetic account. Evil, besides providing him with drama, defended him from the contagion of nineteenth-century optimism. It was a sort of spiritual prophylactic, a means of rediscovering the tragic point of view. Tragedy can exist only when vice becomes sin; and when Baudelaire talks about sin he has this necessity in mind. A man with vices is a nuisance doomed to the Small Debts Courts and the disapproval of his relatives. Considered as vice, Macbeth's murder of Duncan does not go beyond the limits of any other squalid crime. It is murder for profit, and nothing else. But considered as sin (which it is to Shakespeare) it at once becomes fit material for poetry. The haunting introspection, Banquo's ghost, the Weird Sisters, follow as matters of course. Lady Macbeth can go mad with no impropriety; the squalor and confusion become significant and tragic. Baudelaire was born too late to write tragedies; the *genre* was dead over a century before his time. But his verse is the nearest thing to tragic verse the nineteenth century has left us.

This was perhaps Baudelaire's greatest triumph: he succeeded in making the nineteenth century tragic. Other poets of the time, such as Tennyson and Hugo, felt the need; but with less judgment than Baudelaire they found no better means of satisfying it than by turning out conventional tragedies, only slightly rejuvenated by Romantic methods,

about Bloody Mary and the Borgias. Perhaps if Baudelaire had lived twenty years earlier he might have done the same, although this is doubtful. His critical sense was too keen; it would have saved him from any sterile attempt to beat the great classical dramatists on their own ground. He seems to have understood that poetry, to be truly valid, must be contemporary, must deal with and interpret its own age, must be, in other words, "modern," even when (as in *Paradise Lost*) it chooses settings which are not immediately familiar.

For a number of reasons it had become very difficult to write poetry of this kind by the middle of the nineteenth century. The industrial revolution had transformed civilization to such an extent that poetry was at a loss. What "poetry" could be made of the modern city—factory chimneys, railroads, stench of chemicals? None, apparently, if we are to judge by most of the verse which appeared at the time. It is usually escapist, infected with a particularly virulent species of exoticism, both of space and time. Nearly all the French poets lived in Paris, but they avoided the city as subject-matter. Hence Bloody Mary and the Borgias. If the poets remained modern, they went to the tropics for their subject-matter, or toyed with mantillas and roses in Andalusia. The cult of Nature itself became exotic, as escapist as the rest. The city was left to the prose writers like Balzac; poetry dealt in distant landscapes and civilizations, or in lush evocations of the vegetable universe.

Baudelaire turned his back on this convention. He chose modern life as his subject, or, as he called it in "Le Salon de 1845," one of his earliest works, "l'héroisme de la vie moderne." He developed the idea in subsequent essays, such as "Le Salon de 1859" and the studies of Méryon and Guys; and to find this modern heroism he sought it where it might best be seen, in the great city. This was certainly original. Poems like Wordsworth's sonnet on London are rare in all literatures; yet poems of this kind form a large proportion of *Les Fleurs du Mal*. Baudelaire is the least exotic of nineteenth-century French poets. There is no exoticism of time in his poetry, no search for glamorous epochs; he remained in the nineteenth century. What exoticism of space occurs (based on memories of his trip to Mauritius) is usually employed to throw into high relief what he called "la noire majesté de la plus inquiétante des capitales."[4]

The proceeding was no accident; it was quite deliberate; and it preoccupied Baudelaire more and more as time passed. He found the initial idea for his prose poems in Aloysius Bertrand's little work *Gaspard de la nuit*, a typical Romantic evocation of Renaissance Paris.

But, he says, "ce qu'il [Bertrand] avait fait pour la vie ancienne et pittoresque, je voulais le faire pour la vie moderne et abstraite." Most of the prose-poems, like most of the *Fleurs du Mal*, are set in Paris or imply an urban background—as the title Baudelaire chose for the volume (*Le Spleen de Paris*) implies. The section of the *Fleurs du Mal* subtitled "Tableaux parisiens" was added to the second edition in 1861, and only a few of its poems had appeared in the first edition four years before. Among Baudelaire's papers was found an unfinished "Epilogue à la ville de Paris," in which, as the line I have quoted at the beginning of this essay suggests, the capital was represented as the inspiration and source of the whole book. Paris was in many ways the most significant world of its time, and the world Baudelaire knew best. He sought his material there just as Dante looked for his in the scandals and intrigues of fourteenth-century Italy. In other words, Baudelaire was simply returning to a great tradition, to poetic sources of much greater authenticity than the oriental bric-à-brac and exotic scenery which pleased so many of his contemporaries. "N'est-il pas l'habit nécessaire à notre époque," he says of modern dress, "souffrant et portant sur les épaules noires et maigres le symbole d'un deuil perpétuel?"[5] For the first time modern man, recognizably such, and not rigged out in a breastplate or trunk-hose, became a subject for poetry, as authentic and tragic on his streets and boulevards, in his boudoirs, brothels, work-houses and gambling dens, as the heroes of Shakespeare or Racine.

> Fourmillante cité, cité pleine de rêves,
> Où le spectre, en plein jour, raccroche le passant! . . .

This spectre, the genius and spirit of the city, presides over all Baudelaire's work, from *Les Fleurs du Mal* to the tortured jottings of his diaries. It accompanied him on his solitary walks; it was always at his elbow, now ironic, now pathetic, suggesting the hidden drama of things, glimmering like a will-o'-the-wisp on the stone coping of a bridge and the long perspectives of quays and boulevards. It permeates the atmosphere with its uneasy voice, brooding in the green and pink silence of dawn along the river—

> Comme un visage en pleurs que les brises essuient,
> L'air est plein du frisson des choses qui s'enfuient—

or stirring restlessly in the sinister golden hush of evening—

> Cependant les démons malsains dans l'atmosphère,
> S'éveillent lourdement comme des gens d'affaire,
> Et cognent, en volant, les volets et l'auvent . . .

Sometimes it lights up an interior with sudden brilliance—a café, a music-hall—or throws into high relief some human specimen, "Mlle Bistouri," a drunken *clochard*, a widow in black listening to a band-concert in the Luxembourg. These evocations of the city are not just a picturesque backdrop of streets and lamp-standards (as they become in the work of some of Baudelaire's disciples); they are significant in the highest degree; they are "le douloureux et glorieux décor de la civilisation,"[6] a revelation of man, his greatness and his squalor, his passions, his perversities, his "goût de l'infini."

Now this sort of thing, despite Baudelaire's apparent ease, was extremely difficult to handle. Not only had it never been used before, but the very spirit of the time was against it. The exoticism of contemporary literature was something more than a craze for the picturesque or a dislike of the new industrialized landscapes. It had a long tradition behind it, summed up in the idea that civilization is somehow artificial and corrupt, decadent in short—the word will out. Popularized by Rousseau and Chateaubriand, the theory had become one of the planks of the Romantic platform, and we find it both before and after Baudelaire, not merely in the *avant garde* and the lunatic fringe of contemporary letters, but in serious philosophers like Taine and in a whole school of psychopathologists—Morel, Moreau de Tours, Richet, Nordau. The modern was equated with the decadent, and if one wrote about the modern, one's work was decadent. Civilization thus being identified with degeneracy, primitivism was identified with health. The idea is by no means dead in our time, and presumably has a long life before it. When Baudelaire chose the city as his theme, he was going against the grain of his age with a vengeance. Most of the outcry raised against his book in his own time and after his death was due to his subject-matter and (the admission must be made) to the way he presented it.

For of course Baudelaire did not entirely escape the influence of his age—*à rebours*. Throughout his essays on the modern one finds a paradoxical tone, a desire to shock and astonish. He likes to stress all the most scabrous modern details (in "Le Salon de 1845," for example, where he choses "criminels, filles entretenues et les faits-divers du *Moniteur* et de la *Gazettee des tribunaux*" as examples of modern heroism), a habit which is nothing more than a drift towards agreement with the naturists, an admission that the modern is both sickly and depraved. There are times when Baudelaire's modernism, like his mysticism, seems merely perverse, as it is in the poems and novels of such writers as Huysmans, Mendès, Rachilde, and Jean Lorrain. Much of the

literature of the century's end is based on the very easy paradox that since civilization is corrupt one can be evilly glamorous in writing about its corruptions. The authors who dealt in this kind of tainted material liked to claim Baudelaire as their predecessor, and they had some justification. Another form of the same thing, considerably dehydrated, however, occurs in our own time in the Waste Land, that languid cocktail party where our dying occidental culture is supposed to be waiting for the regenerating Barbarians. Baudelaire, as Dr. Clark has pointed out,[7] is the first and greatest poet of the Waste Land. He too was frequently exhausted, sterile, and oppressed by his sterility; he too found the modern world played out and decadent. But this is not the dominant theme of his work—however much it may have been relished by the *fin de siècle*. A morbid satisfaction in decadence was not all he found in the modern, much less all he was looking for. In fact, it occurs in only one poem, "J'aime le souvenir de ces époques nues." Baudelaire wanted modern heroism, which is something quite different. In *Les Fleurs du Mal* and the prose works there is a sincere pity for human suffering which makes Baudelaire one of the most touching and human of poets. "La Mort des pauvres," "Le Rebelle," "Les Petites vieilles," and "La Servante au grand cœur" are among the best verse of this kind that has ever been written.

> C'est la Mort qui console, hélas! et qui fait vivre;
> C'est le but de la vie, et c'est le seul espoir
> Qui, comme un élixir, nous monte et nous enivre,
> Et nous donne le cœur de marcher jusqu'au soir. . . .
>
> C'est un Ange qui tient dans ses doigts magnétiques
> Le sommeil et le don des rêves extatiques,
> Et qui refait le lit des gens pauvres et nus. . . .

Here Baudelaire's religious bias was of great value: his sense of evil kept his pity from degenerating into sentimentality. It is the sentimentality of so much nineteenth-century writing of the same kind, even when produced by the greatest poets, which makes it seem false and dated. Evil lifted Baudelaire's view of man onto an eternal plane. He was never in danger of supposing that human defects were temporary, and that the men of his time could be transformed into virtuous demi-gods by social reform and scientific progress. This is another reason for his twentieth-century popularity. The twentieth century may not write tragedies, but it has certainly recovered the tragic sense; it is insecure.

Insecurity was the one thing the nineteenth century lacked. Its sneaking distrust of its own civilization was confined to a small group of thinkers, and was, at bottom, nothing more than an urge towards the vigorous life. The age was fundamentally self-confident—in all its undertakings, from the conquest of Africa to the design of a whatnot. It required self-confidence of no ordinary kind to produce the sort of bad taste which can be seen at the Foire à Ferraille. Other centuries designed their vases to hold flowers and used bronze and silver as part of a logical pattern. Not so the nineteenth. Not one of its enormous urns would hold so much as a rose. As for ornament, it was employed for display, with a magnificent disregard of both utility and aesthetics. Form disappeared, and form, in its profoundest sense, is man's effort to shape and tame the chaotic forces of his nature, or, if they prove too strong for that, to placate them. Man is a monstrous creature, and during most of his history he has been quite conscious of the fact. Hence his hieratic, propitiatory faiths, with their Molochs and their *autos-da-fé*, his tragic poetry and his symphonies, his self-immolation to impossible ideals. But during the prodigious years between 1814 and 1914 his whole nature seemed to undergo a change. He cut himself off from his past, became a creature of free will. Like some fabulous crayfish he built himself a shell so massive and all-embracing that he could not imagine himself without it. His civilization no longer appeared the fragile thing civilization always is—a complex of tastes and habits suspended on a delicate web of neurosis and passion. It became an economic phenomenon, as solid as the new railways and the new iron ships. To see that the old absolutes were still operating behind the massive façade of power and success required an uncommon intuition. Baudelaire had it; and for this reason the catastrophes of our time which have discredited so much of the nineteenth century, have not discredited him. His work does not date in the lurid atmosphere of the present because, while it is much slighter than the verse of Dante or Milton or Aeschylus, it is of the same kind, based on the same problems of good and evil. "La vraie civilization," he wrote in a well-known passage in his diary, "n'est pas dans le gaz, ni dans la vapeur . . . elle est dans la diminution des traces du péché originel." From Baudelaire's point of view (and here it is quite orthodox), man is always responsible for his actions. His misery excites pity, not just a subscription for housing and soup-kitchens.

This attitude, of course, is not without its dangers. A hatred of "progress" usually leads to some variety or other of obscurantism; the victim becomes reactionary, over-religious, takes up Fascism or Communism.

More than one writer has gone this way in recent years. For some time literature has shown an increasing tendency to welcome this or that ideology, and the more ferocious and absolute the ideology, the better. The results have been uniformly deplorable, as we can see from what Fascist and Communist writing we have had; and it must be admitted that this bent, which is based on a disavowal of logic and which leads to a disavowal of reason, exists in Baudelaire. It probably has something to do with his present-day popularity, at least in certain circles. Several things saved him from its worst consequences. He was, after all, the child of an age which was largely Voltairean. He hated Voltaire, but chiefly because Voltaire's ideas had been vulgarized into platitudes. At bottom both men were in agreement on a number of essential points—such as the superiority of the civilized to the primitive: they both had a great admiration for human achievement. This view comes out again and again in Baudelaire's "Salons," with their splendid passages on painting, sculpture, literature, and science, and it is one of the themes of *Les Fleurs du Mal*. It is another reason why he chose the city for his subject: if the metropolis displays best the *héroisme de la vie moderne*, it does so because it contains within its limits the most convincing proofs of man's greatness—both material and moral.

All of this is well illustrated by the "Tableaux parisiens." Two examples will suffice. "Le Jeu" begins with a description of a gambling den of the Second Empire. The worn armchairs, the gas-jets, the green baize, the old strumpets and toothless gamesters who watch the cards—we might be looking at an etching by Daumier. Baudelaire is describing something he has seen himself; and at first glance, it does not seem promising. These lurid décors have been the ruin of more than one poet; their evil glamor is so fascinating that he often forgets to tell us why he is describing them. But there was no danger of this with Baudelaire: his pity for human suffering and his admiration for human greatness saved him from the contrary extremes of superiority and sentimental gush. His initial idea enlarges itself: the gaming table becomes not merely a symbol of man's life (the metaphor is common enough), but of his very nature which, however guilty, depraved, and desperate it may be, and whatever the hopeless odds against it, is somehow admirable in its very excess and its refusal to lapse into inaction and sterility:

> Moi-même, dans un coin de l'antre taciturne,
> Je me vis accoudé, froid, muet, enviant,
>
> Enviant de ces gens la passion tenace,
> De ces vieilles putains la funèbre gaieté. . . .

Et mon cœur s'effraya d'envier maint pauvre homme
Courant avec ferveur à l'abime béant,
Et qui, soûl de son sang, préférerait en somme
La douleur à la mort et l'enfer au néant.

It is the old Prometheus legend; and to have evoked Prometheus successfully among the crinolines and the gas-jets of the 1860's was an achievement of no small order.

"Le Cygne" grows out of another incident—a swan Baudelaire had noticed wandering on the pavements of the Place du Carrousel, seeking the waters of its native lake. The theme is thus exile, and in developing it, Baudelaire has used several poetic techniques of great interest. The poem, like Racine's tragedies, has a classical lower story. The swan recalls that most famous of exiles, Andromache, and with her the antique legend of Euripides and Virgil. A historical and emotional link is established between past and present which enobles the contemporary incident:

Andromaque, je pense à vous! Ce petit fleuve
Pauvre et triste miroir où jadis resplendit
L'immense majesté de vos douleurs de veuve,
Ce Simois menteur qui par vos pleurs grandit

A fécondé soudain ma mémoire fertile
Comme je traversais le nouveau Carrousel. . . .

All men are exiles, whether in ancient Epirus or modern Paris; all have lost "ce qui ne se retrouve jamais"; and in the concluding lines Baudelaire opens an epic perspective where his personal experience embraces all experience:

Ainsi dans la forêt où mon esprit s'exile
Un vieux Souvenir sonne à plein souffle du cor! . . .
Je pense aux matelots oubliés dans une île,
Aux captifs, aux vaincus. . . A bien d'autres encor!

Such verse has none of the defects which damaged the productions of Baudelaire's contemporaries—Romantic pose and bombast, Parnassian sclerosis; nor does it suggest the glamorous corruptions of the *fin de siècle* and the morbid self-consciousness of the Symbolists which drove them to tie up their meaning in verbal knots whose unravelling too often leaves one with a sense of dupery. Nor is there any of the squeamish erudition of the Waste Landers, whose poems smell already of the dust of the archives. Baudelaire was attempting something else; and the basis of his poetry, after a hundred years, is surely clear: he wanted to give modern life the vehemence which only poetry can give, and

which Antiquity and the Renaissance had both received from their poets. In a sense, every civilization is like his Andromache, "Auprès d'un tombeau vide en extase courbée." Each one must have its legend, and at the bottom of every legend there is a tomb—to remind man of the physical and moral realities of his condition, which, however he may complicate and embellish it, still rises, like the great Roman basilica, over a grave. The nineteenth century is the only age without a legend. It was too busy on its frantic career of conquest, in an uproar of railroads, steam, and gas, to bother about such things. One cannot be both an annexer of continents and a fallen Prometheus. The miracle of Baudelaire is that he should have sprung from such a period. In the midst of his century's Foire à la Ferraille, not then as now laid out in dusty innocuousness on the Boulevard Richard Lenoir, but terribly alive and ferocious (for all this rubbish the dealers sell for a few francs is so much petrified energy, and in Baudelaire's time the willpower it represents was ruling the world, from the style of a crinoline to the conduct of a war), in the midst of it all, Baudelaire was able to see man, modern man, unobscured by the prodigious apparatus of his success.

The success has long since disappeared. The jungle has reabsorbed the railways, and the deserts are drifting quietly across the great highways; the crinolines and the diamond collars, the gasoliers and the pin-trays and the flowered bedroom porcelain, have vanished with the snows of yesteryear, or sunk quietly to the sidewalks of the Boulevard Richard Lenoir. Nobody unscrews the silver-stoppered scent-bottles, ladies no longer have "days," and when the police want a confession they have it whipped out of the culprit—all signs, symptoms, and results of the prodigious changes of the last forty years. Baudelaire's popularity is in part due to these changes. Failure produces a morbid state of soul; like our own age he had failed—failed to pay his debts, failed in his contests with his mother and General Aupick, failed to achieve any sort of tranquillity with Jeanne Duval, though he transferred her from lodging to lodging, clinic to clinic, and ended by becoming so exasperated that he beat her with a candlestick. He was frustrated and depressed; he sat for long hours nourishing his spleen in cafés or watching the rain fall outside his windows; he tried to make capital of his frustration, and, indeed, frequently succeeded, thanks to his genius. All of this flatters our own tastes, corresponds to our own sense of disaster. So much so that certain clairvoyant spirits, examining Baudelaire's present vogue, have wondered how long it can continue, and have warned us that his verse, with its themes of sterility, decay, sin, and death is a little too

modern to be permanent. The criticism is very just—up to a point. Baudelaire, like most nineteenth-century poets, is extremely uneven; a good deal of his poetry is bad, and will seem worse as time passes. But a large proportion of it is quite otherwise. He handled some of literature's greatest themes, and, by giving them contemporary expression, brought them home to us as no poet of the last hundred years has done. If the day ever comes when nobody reads that side of his work—well, the possibility need not worry us much. For in that day nobody will be reading poetry of any kind, anywhere.

NOTES

1 The first edition of *Les Fleurs du Mal* appeared in 1857; the second, enlarged, in 1861; the third posthumously, and still further enlarged, in 1868. Baudelaire's "modernism" has been stressed by all his admirers, beginning with Verlaine in 1865: Laforgue, Gide, Valéry, Bourget, Barrès, Eliot, Turnell, Connolly.

2 It is perhaps significant that Dominique Aury, in his *Anthologie de la poésie religieuse française* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943), which contains extracts dating from the thirteenth to the twentieth centuries, quotes nothing from Baudelaire, although 14 of the 325 pages are devoted to Verlaine. Presumably there was nothing from Baudelaire that could be quoted.

3 M. A. Ruff, *L'Esprit du mal et l'esthétique baudelairienne* (Paris: Colin, 1955).

4 Baudelaire, the essay on Méryon, *Œuvres* (Pléiade), II, 272.

5 "Le Salon de 1845," *Œuvres*, II, 54–5.

6 "Le Salon de 1859," *Œuvres*, II, 271.

7 A. F. B. Clark, review of Martin Turnell's *Baudelaire: A Study of His Poetry*, in *Canadian Forum*, XXXIV (June, 1954), 68.

REVIEW ARTICLES

Edwin John Pratt

The conjunction of Canada's leading poet and her leading critic in the second edition of E. J. Pratt's *Collected Poems*, edited with an Introduction by Northrop Frye (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1958, pp. xx, 395, $5.00), is so fortunate as almost to forbid anything but celebration, at least under native skies. But, as Arnold said of Wordsworthians, those whose admiration has no limits are not usually the best supporters of a reputation; and the appearance of this volume, drawing together the poetry of a long lifetime (Pratt is now in his seventy-sixth year) is too important an event in Canadian literature not to deserve serious critical attention. Since the 1930's Pratt has been as Northrop Frye says a "kind of unofficial poet laureate"; he has enjoyed the warmest popular and critical approval in this country, and has lived to see his poetry imbibed enthusiastically by young Canadian poets not even dreamed of when he concocted his first witches' brew. The judgment of time on this book will fall not only on Pratt, but on Canadian poetry as a whole and on Canadian taste, both popular and educated.

It is a little difficult now to appreciate the strength and originality, in the Canadian scene, of Pratt's first published collection, *Newfoundland Verses* (1923), but a glance at the contemporary poetry of D. C. Scott, Carman, Roberts, or Pickthall, for example, will give some sense of that sudden increase in emotional and intellectual vitality, in range of subject-matter, and in robustness of expression which constituted a virtual revolution. Add to this *The Witches' Brew* (1925), that comically irreverent rehearsal of what were to be some of Pratt's central themes, and we recognize a new voice unaggressively but undeniably asserting itself as the late-Romantic school was becoming exhausted. However, if we turn to the younger poets of the 1920's (Pratt was then in his early forties), we see a simultaneous revolution of a very different kind taking place. A. J. M. Smith, F. R. Scott, and A. M. Klein looked upon themselves as the purveyors of the modern post–World War I critical spirit, and claimed to introduce Yeats, Eliot, and Sitwell and their interests and innovations into Canadian poetry. Pratt's *Newfoundland Verses* appear in certain respects plainly nineteenth-century by comparison, and his later development was out of the main stream. For Pratt was individualistic enough not only to break with tradition, but also to continue on his way

without apparent concern for those of his fellow Canadian poets who enthusiastically entered the cosmopolitan stream and, using the literary techniques of imagism, free verse, complex metaphor, logical discontinuity, and so on, travelled through the Waste Land into the new provinces of radicalism or Anglo-Catholicism or the subconscious. Depending on one's sympathies, Pratt stands out in recent Canadian literary history like a fossilized Tyrranosauros or like an untamed free-swimming Monarch of the Seas.

It has never really been possible to accuse Pratt of being out of touch with his immediate time and place. Not only are there, to bear witness to his openness to the present, the echoes of World War I in *Newfoundland Verses* ("Ode to December, 1917" and "A Fragment from a Story" are left out of the *Collected Poems*), but there are in later years the long poems based on World War II: *Dunkirk* (1941), *Behind the Log* (1947)—the story of wartime convoy service—and *They are Returning* (the last also uncollected). In other volumes there are frequent direct reflections of international and domestic history between the wars: the Great Depression; the rise of totalitarianism; Italian, German, and Japanese aggression; and, more generally, the brazen triumphs of the modern machine over humanity. Pratt has held the mirror up to his society for four decades, and a lively record of its perversities, its sins, and its shame, as well as it courage and achievements, is to be read in his poetry. He has shown at times that he could be as adept at satire and irony as many of his more Audenesque contemporaries. His snapshot "The Man and the Machine" catches the deformed body of industrial man behind the wheel of the subtle, powerful, even beautiful machine he has created, and the juxtaposition speaks eloquently of the transubstantiation that has taken place:

> This creature with the cougar grace,
> This man with slag upon his face.

The fiercer irony in "From Stone to Steel" merely enlarges the focus to a longer time-span:

> The snarl Neanderthal is worn
> Close to the smiling Aryan lips,
> The civil polish of the horn
> Gleams from our praying finger tips.

These are typical of *Many Moods* (1932), Pratt's second collection of shorter poems, and they bear the mark of their day. We need not, however, look to "the scolding young men of the thirties" (so called by Northrop Frye) for the source of Pratt's type of tough-mindedness. Long before, in childhood perhaps, he seems to have caught the disenchanted, unsentimental temper of the Newfoundland fisherman. What previous, land-locked Canadian poet could have spoken with the sardonic wit of "The Drag-Irons," another poem from *Many Moods*:

> He who had learned for thirty years to ride
> The seas and storms in punt and skiff and brig,
> Would hardly scorn to take before he died
> His final lap in Neptune's whirligig.

But with his Captain's blood he did resent,
With livid silence and with glassy look,
This fishy treatment when his years were spent—
To come up dead upon a grapnel hook.

Sometimes Pratt's connection with the immediate world of events was too close, and led to poetry with too momentary a source of power. (The name SEBASTOPOL should explode at the end of the poem "Father Time"; now the fuse sputters.) But more often the basis is not merely history—what *has* happened—but universal experience—what is with us always in one form or another. Fortunately so, for recently "the times" have been especially untrustworthy. Pratt's contemporaries in the late twenties and the thirties either congratulated him on his social awareness or condemned him for not going far enough. The sympathy which would offer "an apocalyptic dinner" ("The Depression Ends") to the hungry thirties was good, but what was to be done in the practical world of soup-kitchens, the dole, and workers on the march who were not prepared to wait till Doomsday for satisfaction? *The Fable of the Goats and Other Poems* (1937) and *Still Life and Other Verse* (1943), Pratt's third and fourth collections of shorter verse, show the strain of these social pressures. The title poem of the former tried to find a resolution in an unpopular and comparatively unpoetic parable suggesting mutual self-abnegation as a social panacea; "A Prayer-Medley" from the same book sounds angrier notes. You will find neither of these in the *Collected Poems*, but the title poem of the later volume is there, and it embodies the same social concern more effectively. With the whole contingent of Canadian poets of the 1930's taking a marked shift to the left, Pratt had moved too, even to the point where he could condemn, like the advocates of complete social commitment, the aloof and detached art of "still life":

To the poets who have fled
To pools where little breezes dusk and shiver,
Who need still life to deliver
Their souls of their songs,
We offer roses blanched of red
In the Orient gardens,
With April lilies to limn
On the Japanese urns—
And time, be it said,
For a casual hymn
To be sung for the hundred thousand dead
In the mud of the Yellow River.

Nevertheless, though Pratt at times wore the ideological expressions of the radical poets in the anthology *New Provinces* (1936), his features were always of a basically different kind—liberal, humanitarian, Christian. Today some people regard these features as the kid gloves and side-whiskers of a dead Victorian complacency. Political radicalism, it is true, no longer threatens traditional values in the same way: even F. R. Scott's mild jibe at Pratt's version of the building of the C.P.R. ("Where are the coolies in your poem, Ned?") now appears anachronistic, such are the vicissitudes of history.

But A. J. M. Smith's comment on Pratt's poetic disposition is more pressing: "the very expansiveness of his good nature and the exuberance of his energy serve as something of a barrier, for the younger [Canadian poets] are divided and complex, and, whatever virtues they possess, geniality and heartiness are not among them." Aesthetic detachment, irony, despair, *Angst*: has the poetry of Pratt any place in a world where these attitudes are dominant? The question must be met, though we must be sure first that it is not a *petitio principii*.

Pratt's poetic world is certainly not one where thoughtful men appear "full of sorrow and leaden-eyed despairs," but rather a world brought to a crisis where action is necessary at once. His heroes are not the thinkers or the outcasts of society, but rather its leaders and rank and file meeting immediate and radical challenges as best they can. His attitude towards his matter is not romantic but classical: rational, orderly, logical in psychic process, moving deliberately and consciously outward to organize materials in objective patterns. Canadian poets since the 1880's have emphasized the unconscious elements in their psychic life, allowing moods to well up from within and find their appropriate form, bathing the external world in a subjective flow, or in more recent years encouraging the mythopoeic powers of love and hate and fear to dominate the reality principle. Clarity, intelligence, impersonality, a sense of the limitations of man's nature, a recognition of the exigencies of society and of the position of the poet within it—these are the elements of Pratt's classicism. They are also the factors that should justify the term masculine so often applied, sometimes misapplied, to aspects of his poetry.

Not only has Pratt's writing been contrary to the dominant poetic of today, but his development makes it perfectly clear that the divergence has been progressive and deliberate. In *Newfoundland Verses*, the point of departure, there are some excellent finished poems, but the volume on the whole gives the impression of a series of fragments: moods, meditations, qualities, with their cause or base just hinted at or only partially realized. In retrospect we might be tempted to call them lyrics in search of a narrative—indeed, "Flashlights and Echoes" (of which only parts appear in the *Collected Poems*) is exactly that. The main movement of modern poetry would have led to further fragmentation. But Pratt turned in the opposite direction: to search for fuller narrative correlatives for inner states, to try to create imaginative worlds of significant action; and the central course of his development is not so much through the four collections of shorter poems I have mentioned as from "The Ice-Floes" through such long poems as "The Cachalot" and "The Great Feud" (1926), *The Roosevelt and the Antinoe* (1930), *The Titanic* (1935), *Brébeuf and His Brethren* (1940), and *Towards the Last Spike* (1952).

"The Cachalot" and "The Great Feud," like *The Witches' Brew* (Pratt's comic declaration of independence), take us away from the quicksands of Victorian inhibition, philosophical meditation, and personal moralizing into an impersonal, mainly non-human arena of action. What a release of energy results. The Cachalot, a leviathan suggesting all the power and glory of natural creation, is a creature whose titanic life-force is so delighted in by the poet that the whale is allowed to dwarf and destroy his commercialized

human attackers, though dying in the process. The more equivocal "Great Feud" takes us back into a mythical prehistoric period of bestial chaos, sea-creatures warring against land-creatures. The two opposite ends of the evolutionary scale break ranks in this battle—"Tyrranosauros Rex," the dinosaur which has survived as a freak throw-back of an even more savage epoch, goes wild in a fury of primeval destructiveness knowing neither friend nor enemy; the female anthropoidal ape, an evolutionary step ahead of all the other beasts, has the cunning to withdraw from the battle she herself started and to escape the final annihilation. She is seen in safety at the poem's end, still bestial but (we may pray) a little wiser, lovingly mothering her young, presumably the vanguard of humanity which will evolve from her.

"Where are the human beings in your poems, Ned?" we can imagine F. R. Scott asking. Though John Sutherland's original and ambitious attempt to extrapolate a meaning in terms of Christian symbolism provides an emphatic answer (*The Poetry of E. J. Pratt*, Toronto, 1956), it is frequently unconvincing, and in one's reading these lively earlier narratives continue to shift a little disconcertingly between exuberant comedy and portentous parable. Man comes into his own obviously in *The Roosevelt and the Antinoe*, *The Titanic*, and after. From fantasy to historical events, from the animal world to that of men, from free myth-making to mundane actuality—the compulsion is natural, especially with the rising social and moral pressures of the thirties; but how is the poet to make his action, now rooted in history, meaningful beyond the level of record without losing the strength of impersonality and objectivity? *The Roosevelt* tends to remain fixed in the objective world, an exciting story with reality and consistency, but weighed down by its empirical exigencies, its mass of local detail, its specific context. In *The Titanic* symbol and actuality triumphantly fuse. History itself provided a parable: man's pride and complacency in his civilization, in his inventiveness, in his power over crude nature, sails heedlessly forward, blinded by its own brilliant illumination, and meets the "paleolithic face" of the iceberg—casual, indeterminate, possibly diabolical, brute force which man can never conquer, a ruthless reminder of the subhuman both within and outside himself. Yet survival, as Conrad might have said, is not necessarily a requisite of victory. In the many epiphanies which the sinking occasions, some are of essential bestiality or cowardice, but memories of courage and self-sacrifice linger on after the *Titanic*'s lights are extinguished forever.

How characteristic of Pratt's independent way that after the outbreak of World War II his concern should find expression in a poem so completely removed from the immediate scene as *Brébeuf and His Brethren*, his most powerful work. This story of Jesuit martyrdom in seventeenth-century New France tells of incredible suffering, incredible courage, faith to the point of fanaticism, endurance to a pathological degree, and limitless cruelty and bestiality which equal and echo the brutality of the modern world; but despite the fact that its tragic affirmation of life had a peculiar relevance to the 1940's, all overt comment is avoided. *Towards the Last Spike* (1952), the epic of Canadian nation-building, takes us from the sphere of grace to the sphere of nature, from the superhuman heroism of the martyr Brébeuf to

the statesmanlike determination, the more mundane heroism, of the politician John A. Macdonald. Both are stories of exploration, conquest, and civilization in the New World, but for Brébeuf the essential dominion is spiritual:

> A different empire built upon the pulses.
> Where even the sun and moon and stars revolved
> Around a Life and a redemptive Death. . . .

For Macdonald the conquest was political and geographical, to slay the giant dragon of the North American continental mass, and also the dragons of doubt in the minds of a cautious and ununified people. The passion of the earlier poem is matched by the wit of the later, and in both the artful ease of the narrative movement suggests a poet who knows exactly what he wants to do and who has the mature powers to do it.

In Pratt's imaginative world, then, heroic action seems always possible. It is a world built upon two quite unoriginal ideas whose fusion produces a third thing, a unique setting from which most of Pratt's poetry emerges. The two ideas are those contained in the Christian myth of the Incarnation and the scientific myth of Evolution. It may be that for Pratt the immensities of this continent and of the ocean at its shoulder helped to make imaginatively viable the enormous stretch of evolutionary time, as it never was for nineteenth-century English poets. At any rate, again and again his poetry stirs with a powerful sense of the vast stretches of space and time in which mankind is set to play its part. For Pratt, moreover, evolution is a process of accretion as much as one of refinement or progress. Juxtapositions of early and late in the scale of evolution, or devastatingly sudden shifts backward from the present, provide frequent poetic illuminations, as when in "Come Away, Death" the falling bomb explodes and

> . . . human speech curved back upon itself
> Through Druid runways and the Piltdown scarps,
> Beyond the stammers of the Java caves. . . .

In "The Highway," however, we get a direct reminder that Pratt's evolutionary vision is not merely secular and scientific. Over the highway of evolution the march of life, through countless aeons, has led from material chaos to order (the orbit of Aldebaran) and earthly beauty (the first June rose) and to its climax:

> When Nature kept her tryst
> With the unfoldment of the star and flower—
> When in her sacrificial way
> Judea blossomed with her Christ!

("O Star! O Rose! O Son of Man!") The Incarnation gives a fixed point, a pattern, and an ideal to a process of change which is otherwise apparently without beginning or end. The nineteenth-century stir of fear and wonder at the vast inhuman evolutionary span joins with a seventeenth-century intensity of faith, and neither is cancelled out.

It is evident why Pratt's is a poetry of action. His narratives explore the range of life which radiates backward and forward in time from that moment

of light, order, and love. He is at home in every phase of it—prehistoric, oceanic, aeronautic, in man's historical past or present (war, peace, depression), or in his mythical future (the "ultimate return" of "Fire"). The archetypal action in this world, Christ's sacrifice, is the standard, and all other acts are measured by the extent to which they approach or fall away from it. Moreover, they are the proper subject-matter of poetry; poetic beauty is still to be found today, not in "still life" but in "The Deed," as Pratt says in the late poem by that name—that is, in the redemptive act of sacrificial heroism. For this reason Pratt's narratives focus on moments of crisis (at the stake, on the sinking ship, on the embattled beaches) when ultimate challenges must be faced. Hence Pratt's popularity: such poetry aims, like the mythos of Christianity, to appeal simultaneously to the magi and the shepherds. The Christian archetype does not ensure a cosy or even a comfortable world-view, though it would seem to have existential as well as aesthetic meaning for the poet. From *The Witches' Brew* on Pratt has continued to treat the conventional pieties with an uninhibited irreverence. God conceived of in a too narrowly anthropological way appears in his poems as a satiric butt: the great Panjandrum of "The Truant," or more mildly elsewhere as the "Master of the skies" or the "cosmic seneschal." Behind this puppet figure, the ghost in the evolutionary machinery, is a more distant, mysterious, ineffable life-force which compels matter and spirit on their troubled way. The immediate world of brute force is barely comprehensible, chaos is threatening at all times; and the sacrificial act of love in the human life of Christ, figuring a conception of Deity united with and pledged to mankind, redeems without lessening the ordeal. Whatever may have been true of Pratt's celebrated stag-parties (we get the idea from the mood of *The Witches' Brew*) there is little "geniality and heartiness" in Pratt's religious faith, or rather in the poetry in which it manifests itself.

Even Pratt's shorter poems have a narrative tendency, that is, they show the impersonality, the clarity and logical movement, and the strong progressive thrust of the narratives. The lyrics march resolutely forward to a climactic last line or concluding image. The minor key, the delicate and subtle observation, the fragile mood, are not completely ruled out, as in "The Ground Swell" with its evocation of the intangible pathos of the sound of the sea:

> . . . some dull pang that grew
> Out of the void before Eternity
> Had fashioned out an edge for human grief . . . ;

or "Sea-gulls" (birds which appear again later in "The Deed," wonderfully metamorphosed, "settling with their pentecostal wings"):

> Now settling one by one
> Within green hollows or where curled
> Crests caught the spectrum from the sun,
> A thousand wings are furled.
> No clay-born lilies of the world
> Could blow as free
> As those wild orchids of the sea.

The perfecting of narrative technique has obviously not been without loss. The larger poems must seem extroverted, heavy, and coarse-grained beside such delicacy. Energy, wit (where it escapes being coy, rollicking, or elephantine), verbal exuberance, strength of feeling—these qualities have flourished under the discipline of heroic verse; but Pratt's appetite for experience (and for polysyllabic words) has been insatiable and his poetry has undoubtedly stiffened from the strong diet he has fed on: modern technology, the terms of warfare and merchant shipping, the strategies of convoys and evacuations, as well as of nineteenth-century Canadian politics. Nevertheless, when all the reservations are made the body of poetry gathered together in the *Collected Poems of E. J. Pratt* remains easily the most impressive yet produced by a Canadian poet. And it seems inevitable that as time goes on readers will continue to delight in the range of life and of expression, the power of feeling, and the magnanimity of this poetry.

The book is handsomely printed; the line-drawings by Frank Davies have a discreet spareness and simplicity; and the frontispiece, though untypical, serves to suggest those sure qualities of character and personality which have won the poet the respect and friendship of so many. The Introduction by Northrop Frye, whose Midas touch upon Canadian poetry has transformed so many more drab domestic furnishings, is an example of his unique kind of witty, vital, and penetrating critical exposition at its best. Anyone writing about E. J. Pratt in the future is likely to find what he wants to say either said or implied already there, and a good deal more besides. As "an act of personal homage to the poet in his seventy-fifth year," it honours both the poet and the critic by speaking eloquently for but never instead of the poetry.

F. W. WATT

Explorations across the Great Divide

The Great Divide in contemporary philosophy is not really between the friends and enemies of metaphysics. It is between those who accept and those who reject the view that philosophy is an independent subject. Until quite recently, no one would have dreamt that a rejection of this view was possible. Everybody assumed that philosophy is a subject which embodies certain truths about the universe and man. These truths cannot be established by any other discipline, and they are presented in doctrines or theories supported by proofs. This conception has now been abandoned by a number of philosophers, especially in England. Under Wittgenstein's banner bearing the revolutionary slogan "Philosophy is not a theory but an activity," they have travelled across the Great Divide, and are busy exploring the terrain they have entered. The reports of their explorations have been given a mixed reception by those who have remained behind. To conservatives, comfortably settled on ancient philosophical estates, the reports sound like an account of cloud-cuckoo land, and are treated with disdain. To more adventurous souls they sound like the brochures of a travel agency. The descriptions of the country are exciting, but the price one has to pay to get there seems excessive. The travellers themselves obviously enjoy the new climate of opinion and show little interest in returning home.

Several recent publications illustrate this state of affairs in a manner worthy of comment. One of them, Alan White's *G. E. Moore: A Critical Exposition* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell [Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Co. Ltd.], 1958, pp. viii, 226, $5.00), is a lucid, discriminating study of the man whose writings did much to speed the travellers on their way. In a well-known passage Moore once remarked: "I do not think that the world or the sciences would ever have suggested to me any philosophical problems. What has suggested philosophical problems to me is the things which other philosophers have said about the world and the sciences." His puzzlement was chiefly over what on earth a philosopher could have *meant* by what he said. His procedure was to subject the philosopher's words to an analysis in the hope of finding a precise meaning for them. Frequently he was able to show that words whose meaning in ordinary language is perfectly clear were being grossly misused, and that this was the cause of the puzzlement. The clarity of words in ordinary language arises from the fact that ordinary language is an expression of common sense, the ultimate court of appeal which Moore recognized. His writings contain many examples of scrupulous and subtle analysis. Rarely have linguistic confusions been so relentlessly exposed.

Yet as White shows, Moore was too much of a traditionalist to cross the Great Divide. He never regarded philosophy as *merely* an activity of analysis.

He believed that an important part of its business was to give a general description of the universe, including the chief kinds of good things. Such a description would constitute a positive doctrine. Furthermore, he accepted an old-fashioned Cartesian notion of mind and a Platonistic interpretation of concepts. Thinking is a mental activity quite distinct from verbalization. In conductng an analysis we "inspect" concepts which stand before the mind and which are non-psychological entities named by linguistic expressions. Indeed the meaning of a linguistic expression *is* what it names. These views are considered by followers of Wittgenstein to be archaic, untenable, and trouble-making. Mr. White respectfully but firmly disapproves of them, and seeks to show how they adversely influenced Moore's thought.

One of the consequences of regarding philosophy as an analytic activity is the doctrine that philosophy should not culminate in any generalizations. All-embracing philosophical theses are banned. The corrosive effect of this doctrine on classical metaphysics, a generalizing discipline *par excellence*, can easily be imagined. It might be supposed, however, that the classical discipline of formal logic with its highly resistant structure would be impervious to attack. Yet that structure, too, contains many generalizations in the form of "principles" of rational argument. Hence it is not surprising that someone across the Great Divide should undertake to give formal logic an acid bath. This is done by Stephen Edelston Toulmin in *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: At the University Press [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited], 1958, pp. viii, 264, $3.85).

On various occasions in the past formal logic has been attacked without suffering much damage. The Hegelian broadside was sour grapeshot, copious but not penetrating. The pragmatists used to launch the epithet "useless" at traditional syllogisms, but this missile did not land in the target area. Not long ago an Oxford don, P. F. Strawson, aimed some severe strictures at mathematical logic, contrasting it unfavourably with the "logic" of ordinary language; mathematical logicians were wholly unruffled by that criticism. None of these attacks were quite as radical as Toulmin's. For he contends that the idea of a *science* of logic cannot be made intelligible, because there are no principles of rational thought to constitute its subject-matter.

The gist of Toulmin's position is that the categories of formal logic were derived from the study of analytic syllogisms begun by Aristotle, and that the latter are unrepresentative, misleadingly simple types of reasoning. Once derived, the categories were erected into a standard to which all reasoning must conform if it is to be valid. Since a syllogistic conclusion follows with necessity from its premisses, so that one cannot consistently accept the premisses and reject the conclusion, any bit of thinking which failed to exhibit this characteristic was deemed to fall short of logical perfection. Moreover, it was found that the necessity in question depended on the form of the syllogistic argument, not on its content. Accordingly, rules governing the formal features of syllogisms were taken to be the principles of correct reasoning in all fields. The success of this operation beguiled even so astute a philosopher as Kant into concluding that formal logic is "a closed and completed body of doctrine."

It had to be recognized, of course, that syllogistic principles do not apply to some types of argument which are nevertheless judged to be respectable. In jurisprudence and empirical science many conclusions which are plausible or probable rather than necessary have long been admitted. The logic textbooks had, therefore, to find a place for such arguments. They were generally treated in a chapter at the back under the heading "induction." Their subordination to "deduction" was thus maintained. Toulmin characterizes all this as "a crude muddle." It is just a further symptom of the isolation and artificiality of formal logic. Any resemblance between what logic texts discuss and the effective thinking which goes on in real life is purely coincidental.

The remedy is for logic to become an analysis of substantial arguments used in various fields. This involves scrapping the mathematical model on which the traditional syllogism was based, and recognizing that what matters is not the formal validity of arguments but their soundness. If we want a model, it would be better to look for it in the domain of jurisprudence. For in law a sound argument is one which makes a good case, stands up to criticism, and meets the standard required to obtain a favourable verdict. In the light of this model, Toulmin offers a fresh set of logical categories, which he holds is much closer to concrete thought than the figures, moods, and rules of syllogism. The major result of his analysis is that there are no universal principles of sound argumentation. "Arguments within any field can be judged by standards appropriate within that field, and some will fall short; but it must be expected that the standards will be field-dependent, and that the merits to be demanded of an argument in one field will be found to be absent (in the nature of things) from entirely meritorious arguments in another" (p. 255). Logic thus conceived will cease to be the *a priori* codification of eternal truths. It will become an empirical study of arguments that have actually established themselves in diverse spheres. The arguments will be accepted as historical facts quite capable of being superseded at a later date by superior modes of reasoning.

Even the most formal logicians must unbend and admit that the historical study of arguments is a legitimate enterprise. They do not, however, need to admit that it alone is "logic"; for that title can also be claimed on behalf of the study in an abstract calculus of relations among statements and predicates. Toulmin is like a man passionately addicted to surveying who insists that geometry is the technique of measuring land, not the science of points, lines, planes, etc. The reply is that one can surely distinguish pure from applied geometry. If so, why not do the same with logic, admitting that special problems arise when one considers its applications? Moreover, formal logic is not to be identified with the theory of syllogism, any more than pure geometry is to be identified with Euclid's *Elements*. As for the contention that "validity is an intra-field, not an inter-field notion," this is just an *a priori* consequence of the logical categories adopted in the book, not the result of an empirical inquiry. Toulmin is very good at demolishing shaky structures. He is less adept at producing a blueprint of their replacements.

Complaints are sometimes heard about the lack of substance in reports of explorations across the Great Divide. Too often, it is alleged, they deal

exclusively with the analysis of everyday English, as though all a philosopher needed to know in order to ply his trade was how to speak his mother tongue. The story is told that a lecturer in philosophy at Oxford once prescribed as the text for his course the Concise Oxford Dictionary. Even if the story is apocryphal it illustrates a trend. Yet there are signs that the trend is waning and that another is about to begin. An old truth is being rediscovered, namely, that the activity of philosophizing cannot be effectively carried on in the absence of knowledge of other subjects. It is now being whispered that philosophers need especially to become acquainted with scientific ideas. There is a move afoot to have science replace nescience.

An interesting contribution to the new trend is made in Norwood Russell Hanson's *Patterns of Discovery: An Inquiry into the Conceptual Foundations of Science* (Cambridge: At the University Press [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited], 1958, pp. x, 241, $5.00). Employing certain Wittgensteinian techniques, the author addresses himself to the subject of scientific discovery with a view to showing that it involves logical patterns which merit investigation. He is particularly concerned to explore the philosophical aspects of microphysical thinking. For he holds that many of the difficulties associated with quantum theory can be reduced if it is viewed as a developing discipline or process of research, where the emphasis is not on rearranging old facts and explanations into more elegant abstract patterns, but on finding new patterns of explanation. Just as Toulmin thinks that traditional formal logic misrepresents concrete arguments, so Hanson thinks that traditional philosophy of science misrepresents microphysical concepts. The source of error in both cases is a wrong model. Syllogisms are not an adequate paradigm in terms of which to judge sound reasoning. Finished theories, such as planetary mechanics, optics, and electromagnetism, are not an adequate paradigm in terms of which to understand fundamental physics.

How do research scientists actually proceed? Do they first collect observational data, and then incorporate them in general laws? Or do they first adopt a hypothesis, suggested by a flash of insight, and after connecting it with other statements in a hypothetico-deductive system, turn to observations for confirmation or disconfirmation? Hanson's reply is that they do a little of both and a good deal of neither. Using illustrations from the psychology of perception and from the history of science, he shows that observed data, for example, are profoundly affected by the conceptual framework of the observer. Seeing, as he puts it, is "a theory-laden undertaking." On the other hand, "a theory is a cluster of conclusions in search of a premiss. From the observed properties of phenomena the physicist reasons his way towards a keystone idea from which the properties are explicable as a matter of course" (p. 90). Since the aim is to produce an explanation, the keystone idea will have built into it certain features which cannot be pictured. Troubles will inevitably arise if we try to imagine entities akin to common-sense objects which possess these features.

This is the situation in quantum physics. To explain observed characteristics of the material world, it employs the notion of fundamental particles, for example, electrons, whose description is given in mathematical terms. Some

of the properties attributed to an electron tempt us to visualize it as a corpuscle. Other properties tempt us to visualize it as a wave. Both temptations should be resisted. For we are here in the domain of that which is unpicturable in principle, because "electron" is a keystone concept in an explanatory theory. By trying to visualize it we are trying to rob ourselves of what is needed to explain certain physical phenomena. "But *are* there electrons?" someone may ask. Hanson's reply seems to be that since by adopting the concept of these mathematically described particles we can account in great detail for the characteristics of the matter we observe, no better reason for saying that electrons exist could possibly be found. Of course there are electrons. But we can't expect them to pose for a snapshot.

Considerable fuss has arisen over the significance of the uncertainty principle in quantum theory. According to this principle it is impossible to locate the precise position of a particle and at the same time measure its velocity. Various difficulties are thereby generated, including doubts about the universality of the axiom of cause and effect. Some have thought that we must now admit the occurrence of "uncaused" events in the microphysical world. Perhaps electrons have a sort of free will. Hanson indicates the confusions which underlie these notions. He stresses the fact that the uncertainty principle constitutes no problem for quantum physicists, because it is an integral part of their conceptual framework. The principle has entered into every observation of every fruitful experiment since the science began in 1925. Furthermore, quantum theory has notable explanatory power, despite a certain insecurity at its foundations. Some day the whole theory may topple. But meanwhile, to accept it and yet to hope that difficulties associated with the uncertainty principle can be overcome, is like agreeing to play chess and then hoping to overcome the difficulties of possessing just one queen.

Hanson's approach enables him to clear away a number of obstacles which block the path to a proper understanding of microphysics. He would be the first to agree that he has told only a portion of the story. "Our concern," he remarks, "has been not with *giving* physical explanations, but with *finding them*" (p. 157). The book amply demonstrates the value of philosophical analysis which is backed by a solid knowledge of other fields. Some of the most telling points are made by using examples from the history of science. The author is well acquainted with the present state of quantum theory, and does not boggle at a few technicalities. It is refreshing to read a discussion of linguistic issues which is free from the *idée fixe* that ordinary language is sacrosanct. Parts of the book are written in a Wittgensteinian manner and conform to the dictum that philosophy "neither explains nor deduces anything." But other parts offer general conclusions together with supporting grounds. Even across the Great Divide philosophy can retain a bit of its traditional flavour. Or could it be that Mr. Hanson has not really crossed the Divide after all?

Among the great philosophical innovators, Wittgenstein was probably unique in having little or no interest in the thought of the past. His work was totally unhistorical. This same outlook is shared by many of his followers. It is therefore interesting to observe that the three books under con-

sideration depart from orthodoxy by taking historical matters seriously. White looks back at the ideas of G. E. Moore. Toulmin urges logicians to study arguments in their historical contexts, and even suggests that "we can look with new sympathy on Collingwood's vision of philosophy" as the examination of the absolute presuppositions of different cultural epochs. Hanson holds that "profitable philosophical discussion of any science depends on a thorough familiarity with its history." To what extent this emphasis may alter the character of British analytic philosophy remains for the future to disclose. Already there are signs that the revolutionaries have sighted terrain worth exploring on the home side of the Great Divide. Perhaps those traditionalists who, in the face of a certain amount of jeering, have stuck to the view that knowledge of the history of philosophy is important for philosophers, may yet find themselves among the *avant garde*.

T. A. GOUDGE

Chaucer: A Parliament of Critics

It is pleasant, while scanning the history of Chaucer's literary reputation, to recall his self-sufficient remark outside the House of Fame: "I wot myself best how I stonde." His contemporaries did not praise a humorist but a sage ("O Socrates!") or a votary of Venus. The Restoration's best critic and verse-technician responded warmly to the poet but regretted that his verse was "not harmonious to us." The author of *Don Juan* thought him "obscene and contemptible"; Coleridge found him "exquisite and tender." Arnold's decision that Chaucer lacked "high seriousness" is often noted, gloomily, by critics to whom he appears quite serious enough, and a consummate comedian to boot. Fond as Chaucer was of the consoling identity of old and new, his famous enigmatic irony will be useful to him now if he is looking down on a kind of Chaucerian Great Year in which criticism, eulogistic and otherwise, is busy recapitulating centuries of diverse opinion.

Of special interest, since it combines criticism with a new edition of the poems in a consistently normalized but not modernized spelling (quoted in the extracts below) is E. T. Donaldson's *Chaucer's Poetry: An Anthology for the Modern Reader* (New York: The Ronald Press, 1958, pp. vi, 1001, $6.50). About three-quarters of *The Canterbury Tales*, the complete *Troilus and Criseide*, and a good selection of the minor poems are included, with a spirited commentary treating Chaucer as a highly sophisticated poet who can at times seem almost of one substance with God the Creator. Donaldson avoids the sort of criticism which has "recently been reading Chaucer primarily as an exponent of medieval Christianity," but he nevertheless finds plenty to say about the poet's religion and discovers intimations of divinity in Chaucer's funniest poems: an engaging critical attitude. The current supply of Chaucerian books illustrates other possibilities, however. One chapter of Mary Giffin's *Studies on Chaucer and His Audience* (Hull, P.Q.: Les Editions "L'Eclair," 1956, pp. 127, $4.75) builds from a single line in *The Parliament of Fowls* a historical explanation of the poem and of its composition for a small, exceptionally perspicuous audience. Professor J. A. W. Bennett's *The Parlement of Foules: An Interpretation* (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 1957, pp. x, 217, illus., $4.50) is a gloss roughly equal in size to the one Macrobius made for Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*—a commentary Chaucer says he pored over until he dreamed of the bird-assembly itself. Paull F. Baum, in *Chaucer: A Critical Appreciation* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press [Toronto: Burns and MacEachern], 1958, pp. xiv, 230, $7.50), castigates Bennett for this elaborate treatment and "professional Chaucerians" at large for their gratuitous aggrandizement of a comfortably talented, even brilliant man of the world. Thus happy readers may compare a Chaucer almost godlike in intelligence and compas-

sion (Donaldson), a skilled craftsman trimming four of his rhyme-royal poems to restricted audiences (Miss Giffin), a philosopher-bard who amalgamates courtly love-verse and the most profound themes of the mediaeval Christian polity (Bennett), and "an amateur of genius" whose uneven literary productions are a challenge to the sympathetic critic (Baum) for reasons lamented by the poet himself in his *Parliament*:

> For bothe I hadde thing which that I nolde,
> And eek I ne hadde that thing that I wolde.

A short view of such varied criticism might begin by comparing Baum and Donaldson on a few common subjects, and then notice what they and Bennett do with (or to) *The Parliament of Fowls*.

The distinction between Chaucer the poet and "Chaucer" the fictive narrator in the *Tales* and other poems is crucial but delicate. Donaldson believes we must separate poet and pilgrim, the latter dependent on the former though never in a stable ratio. "The pilgrim Chaucer constantly falls a victim to his faith in a simple one-to-one correspondence between the various facets of reality." With Donaldson as guide, then, the reader joins the pilgrimage as an exercise in double audition, during which he must constantly twiddle the dials of his dramatic-ironic-paradoxical pre-amplifier: he must be alert when the pilgrim Chaucer, hypnotized by the Prioress, so praises her social charm as to diminish the nun and enhance the woman; but the pilgrim then (without warning from poet to reader) speaks out bravely against the Summoner's irreverence, only to compound the Summoner's offence with one of his own. This subtle reading of the dramatic framework of the *Tales* is a valuable corrective to an older view that the historical Geoffrey Chaucer is somehow present in his own poem. It is a reading, moreover, which magnifies the brilliance of many a familiar passage. But Baum suggests that the different *I*'s of the narrative cannot always be distinguished in this way. The poet at one moment associates himself with the pilgrim, then allows the pilgrim to speak idiosyncratically, and again speaks in his own right, the pilgrim forgotten or suppressed—there are not two but three points of view—with a bedazzling ambiguity of personal pronouns and demonstrative adjectives. The reader-pilgrim, after all, will learn from Baum and Donaldson to listen carefully and to step warily.

When they treat the *Tales* themselves, these two practised scholars ride into the lists from opposite directions and, though they are not aiming at each other, crash together in the middle. Or it might be truer to say they are entered in separate tourneys under different ground-rules. Donaldson's purpose is "to make the pleasure of Chaucer as accessible as possible" for a beginner or general reader; others are privileged to look in. His commentary neglects many traditional topics of Chaucer criticism to discuss the poems afresh. Flaws and puzzles in the poems do not much figure in it, and certain of the poet's superb achievements are noted copiously and originally. On the other hand, Baum writes for those who know Chaucer well and

Chaucer criticism probably too well. He also stresses relatively neglected topics (Chaucer's prosody, for example), but he believes, with Bagehot, that it is no business of the critic to be thankful; therefore the lapses even of "an amateur of genius" are instructive, though the discovery of them be heretical. Still, for Baum as for Donaldson, the end of Chaucer's art is to give pleasure. "Seriousness, in spite of Arnold, is not a word to conjure with; it is not a matter of subject but of treatment, of careful attention to getting the thing said in the best possible way. Has not Mr. T. S. Eliot told us that Villon's *Testament* is more serious than *In Memoriam*? In the same sense the Miller's Tale is more serious than the Knight's Tale, the Canon's Yeoman's than the Franklin's." We read later, "The Knight's Tale is a small thing beside *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*," and indeed under Baum's astringent criticism it becomes an early apprentice-work, abundantly enjoyable but marred by the poet's odd flippancy at hard moments in the story, his curious anticlimaxes, his unresolved contradictions, and the blighting officiousness of Theseus. To Donaldson, Theseus seems the spokesman for a paradoxical and "peculiarly Chaucerian" theme, "that a man ought to maintain a suspicious and detached attitude toward a world in which he must be wholeheartedly involved."

One notices in fact that the poet's noble heroes tend to be reduced in Baum's estimate and exalted in Donaldson's. (Chaucer of course saw to it that they were conditioned to such fortunes: "Now up, now down, as boket in a welle.") In Baum's view the Franklin's Tale is an unconvincing summary of the marriage sequence partly because the knight Arveragus is never credible. This hero's climactic statement, "Trouthe is the hyeste thing that man may keepe," is for Baum irrelevant and even unpleasant, while the Franklin's description of an ideal husband, "Servant in love and lord in mariage," is no solution to the marriage issue but merely "an epigrammatic juggling phrase." Arveragus' virtue in sending his beloved wife Dorigen to another lover in the interests of "trouthe" has been questioned by critics before Baum. "But if we criticize Arveragus," says Donaldson, "we are really making Dorigen's initial mistake, which was to assume that the world owes it to us to make us practical returns for our idealism. Arveragus knows better: an ideal has no relevance unless we are willing to sacrifice our whole world to it—and *trouthe* is 'the highest contract that man may keep.' Of course, Arveragus is right." Under this interpretation the generous idealism of Chaucer's story is not compromised because the *bourgeois* narrator of the Franklin's Tale conceives of "trouthe" as a "thing," a binding contract. "For in the poem the Christian virtue of *freedom* (generosity) fulfills the Old Testament contractual law of *trouthe* (the covenant)."

The final stanzas of *Troilus and Criseide* have tested many a critic's ingenuity. Baum does not pretend to explain their difficulties away, but concentrates on the tensions which produced them. Pandarus says, "I hate Criseide," and the abruptly ended love story is followed by an apparent miscellany of loose narrative threads, reflections on female infidelity and the hazards of manuscript transmission, an indictment of worldly love, a dedication to Gower and Strode, and a closing Christian exhortation and

prayer. Baum interprets these stanzas in terms of Chaucer's inconclusive determinism, complicated by the demands of plot and character in a new kind of poem. He sees Chaucer as trapped by such difficulties and prevented from attaining "the rightful climax" of the poem: either a Dantean vision, with the heroine transfigured as a symbol of "that merging of earthly and heavenly love which transcends our limited experience and ennobles by the imagination both mind and spirit"; or a conclusion like Henryson's wintry sequel, where she is punished as leper and prostitute, this being "the true solution"; or simply an end at line 1750 of the final book, at which point she has betrayed the sorrowing Troilus, "Fortune has had her way, and such (heaven help us) is life." Some readers may still prefer the suggestive infelicity of Chaucer's ending, which conceivably achieves something as valuable as a closed form for the poem when it seems to betray and dramatize the author's involvement with the story and to include the reader in the author's sense of frustrated finality. Donaldson offers a more difficult reading, in which the extant finale is the inevitable product of the poem's complex vision. "As has been said before, nothing a poet writes is ever cancelled out by anything else he writes, and both the haunting loveliness of the story of Troilus and Criseide and the necessity of rejecting it remain valid for the reader. And also, one may suppose, for Chaucer."

The Parliament of Fowls is a minor poem that has generated as much enthusiastic disagreement as the *Troilus*. Donaldson subsumes the paradoxes of its various attitudes towards love ("courtly, carnal, sentimental, scientific, practical, and divine") in the character of the poet-dreamer, a relative of Chaucer the pilgrim, for whom the mysteries of love are incomprehensible and rather saddening. Baum is satisfied to call the poem "a brilliant little comedy" which concedes "that the *homme moyen sensuel* must have his way"—and Chaucer is just that man, indulging himself here as elsewhere in an oblique impropriety or two. Neither critic is content to read the *Parliament* as it has often been read before: as a topical tidbit for the court circle, a social satire, an occasional poem celebrating St. Valentine's Day, or a profound philosophical testament.

Ignoring many such commentaries and ranging far beyond most of them is J. A. W. Bennett's *Interpretation*. It is sure to raise just such a noisy murmuration of discord as was heard in the bird-congress itself, but one need not agree with each of its conclusions to enjoy a nobly written and beautifully illustrated book. Bennett finds in the poem a reflection, not a resolution necessarily, of "the great debate of the age between the philosophy of plenitude and the philosophy of other-wordliness"—in this poem, a debate in the poet's mind and among the birds about the double (Donaldson would say multiform) nature of love. Nature in Chaucer is contrasted meaningfully with Venus, but includes her functions as deity includes creation; Nature is the "vicarye of the Almighty Lord." Since the attitudes within the poem are controlled by the "new" speculative philosophy of St. Thomas and the school of Chartres, a very rich and complex poem is the result. By implication it ends "happily" with "at least the suggestion" that Nature unifies the world and eventually consoles unhappy lovers.

All this is argued by Bennett in a series of essays on Chaucer's rhetorical organization of *topoi*—the Great Chain of Being, Nature and Venus, the paradisal garden, etc.— but there is room for an anatomy of bird-lore, side-glances at newfangled parliamentary procedure, notes on the dream-vision, and much besides, for this criticism is intensive and centrifugal. To understand the *Parliament*, it would demonstrate, is to understand the poem alongside the Knight's Tale and *Troilus*, where Chaucer also sets "common profit" at war with passionate human love, whether or not they are pacified by a recollection of Cicero. And the *Parliament* also sheds its influence on, or takes meaning from, non-Chaucerian objects. In one chapter there is a discussion of Spenser's radical debt to this poem in *The Faerie Queene*. Elsewhere readers will encounter relevant mediaeval figures and also Shakespeare and Freud, Raphael and Yeats, *The Great Gatsby* and *Esquire*'s Petty Girls, for the commentary is almost as full of surprises as the poem, and that is saying a great deal. It is a virtue of this broadly conceived *Interpretation* that it does not balance the meaning of the poem upon a few key lines, and so leave readers unprepared for the variety of the remainder, the syncopations and modulations, the proto-symbolist allusions or quotations in jarring context, the magical play upon rhetorical devices. One reader, at least, returned from commentary to poem to notice that even the vulgar duck is given a *contentio* to answer the "to have and have not" figure quoted above:

> "Daunceth he merye that is mirtheless?
> What sholde I rekke of him that is recchelees?
> Ye, queke," yit said the doke, ful wel and faire:
> "Ther been mo sterres, God woot, than a paire."

But when this charming poem is enlarged to suggest or contain so much, it is surely fair to ask what happens when, by a similar use of partial analogues, it is enlarged further. There are more than a pair of birds in that garden, God wot. Bennett sees the *Parliament* as one of Chaucer's marriage poems, linked to the Knight's philosophical romance. If this is plausible, a reader is tempted to find a shadow play of the *Parliament* in still other poems, the Miller's Tale, for instance, a boisterous inversion of the marriage and "common profit" themes of the Knight's Tale. Must we not then bring the Miller's Absolon and Nicholas and Alisoun into the debate in Nature's garden? They may even be there already, disguised as birds. Quack, yes! For that matter, *The Complaint of Mars* (a not so different courtly valentine sung by another bird), the Squire's Tale (of a bird-heroine who chose courtly love and regretted it), and the marriage debate of Chauntecleer and Pertelote (poor creature) clamour for consideration, too, if we are venturing outside the *Parliament* in order to understand it better. Once gathered, the analogues (not all of which are accepted as such by Bennett) may or may not alter the terms of the bird's parley itself. Why, for one thing, are Chaucer's bird-spokesmen so consistently shown in difficulties because of love and marriage? It is not enough to say that an enlightened courtly love is the solution for some and not for others. Perhaps their trials

in love or their rejection of love itself have something to do with the curiously muted conclusion of the *Parliament*, where the birds sing a roundel and fly away, leaving the awakened narrator to seek better fortune in his books. He has not learned from these birds, therefore, how to resolve a perplexity that existed prior to his dream and within it. And perplexity leads to rejection. The poet-dreamer turns away from the recumbent Venus in her temple: "But thus I leet hire lie." (Pandarus observes, apropos of certain dormant women in the *Troilus*, "It is nought good a sleeping hound to wake.") The *Parliament*'s formel-heroine, though hardly a portrait of the artist as a young eagle, says to love, *Non serviam*: "I wol nat serve Venus ne Cupide." So does Emelye in her prayer in the Knight's Tale—too late, for Palamon, who will win her with heaven's help and Theseus' decree, has just vowed eternal war on chastity. "Love wol nat be constrained," sighs the Franklin, but love always is, by one "maistrye" or another.

What is the force, therefore, of the conclusion of the *Parliament*, and is the ending as affirmative as Bennett shows the poem's central philosophy to be? This critic correctly insists, "We can always trust to the beat of Chaucer's lines, to the pace of his rhythms." Earlier, Venus and the goddess Nature are heralded in urgent, hopeful rhythms, with a "sudden rise and roll in the verse"; but the final lines are too weary for rhetoric, too resigned for more than conventional optimism:

> And with the shouting, whan the song was do,
> That fowles maden at hir flight away,
> I wook, and othere bookes took me to
> To rede upon, and yit I rede alway,
> In hope, ywis, to rede so somday,
> That I shal mete somthing for to fare
> The bet, and thus to rede I nil not spare.

Sufficient unto the day is the affirmation thereof. Chaucer, like Emelye and Nature's formel, has disengaged himself. And the final stanza rhythmically balances the first, which with its hesitant, noncommittal beat might stand also as the summary of the poem it introduces:

> The lif so short, the craft so long to lerne,
> Th'assay so sharp, so hard the conqueringe,
> The dredful joye alway that slit so yerne,
> Al this mene I by Love, that my feelinge
> Astonieth with his wonderful werkinge
> So sore, ywis, than whan I on him thinke,
> Nat woot I wel wher that I flete or sinke.

Floating or sinking, dreaming or waking, the love-dilemma remains; Philosophy has offered a distraction, not a cure. In Boethius' *Consolation*, the vision of Philosophy appeared in marvellous time-darkened garments that had been violated by her admirers. If the *Parliament of Fowls* is evidence, Chaucer did little to mend them, though the Chaucerian gaze of wonder here, as in other places, produced a special kind of poetry.

J. B. BESSINGER

Seven New Books on Shakespeare

Somebody once said that enough books have been written on Shakespeare to repave the streets of London. Year after year, enough new books are appearing to keep up with London's sprawling suburbs. Of the seven books on my table, I would wish this fate to one or two; the rest I wish better; some indeed will occupy a treasured place in my library; and the last I should like to make required reading by all those who persist in believing in the Earl of Oxford.

If Shakespeare's Holofernes had written his own Love's Labour's Lost, it might have vied in pedantry with Georg Heuser's rejection of the view that Shakespeare organized his plays in five acts, in *Die aktlose Dramaturgie William Shakespeare: Eine Untersuchung über das Problem der Akteinteilung und angeblichen Aktstruktur der Shakespeareschen Dramen* (Inauguraldissertation; Marburg, privately printed, 1956, pp. x, 430). The contentions that there were two fundamental traditions affecting structure in Elizabethan drama, one classical and the other popular, and that the latter was stronger, may be reasonable; but to argue that Shakespeare ignored a five-act structure throughout his career, constructing all of his plays in a series of scenes rather than acts, is not. Heuser's disagreement with T. W. Baldwin's well-known *Shakspere's Five-Act Structure*, moreover, provokes him to a lengthy polemical and humourless attack. Baldwin may not have convinced all of us that *Love's Labour's Lost* and *Troilus and Cressida* have a five-act structure (and I for one fail to see any such structure in *Hamlet* or *Antony and Cleopatra*). Yet Shakespeare's main models for comedy were Plautus and Lyly, and to assert that in following them he ignored their five-act structure consistently is such an improbable assumption as to require better proof and evidence than are offered here.

Towards the second book, Miss A. F. Potts's *Shakespeare and The Faerie Queene* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press [Toronto: Thomas Allen Limited], 1958, pp. xiv, 269, $4.75), I should like to be more generous, but I find this difficult. The book begins with the sensible assumption that a comparison of the actions of Shakespeare's characters with those of Spenser in *The Faerie Queene* may cross-illuminate the works of both authors, so long as due attention is given to differences in form. It then develops the interesting thesis that until 1599 Shakespeare's plays reveal little or no awareness of *The Faerie Queene*, but that from *All's Well* on Spenser's narrative and dramatic devices, employed in the setting forth of ethical actions, are so frequently paralleled or echoed as to make it highly probable that Shakespeare came under Spenser's dominating influence. But as previous writers on Spenser and Shakespeare have noticed, close parallels between the two authors are remarkable for their scarcity. When thinking of *Measure for Measure*, it is difficult to imagine that Shakespeare was not familiar with

Spenser's Book of Justice, and Perdita surely owes something to Pastorella. That Shakespeare drew on the story of Phedon in the second book of *The Faerie Queene* while writing *Much Ado* seems almost certain. But a few established echoes apart, Shakespeare's indebtedness to Spenser is very hard to prove, however strongly one may be inclined to expect such an influence. Miss Potts's task was therefore fraught with difficulties from the outset, and she would have been wise to confine her treatment to a cautious comparison between the ethical atmosphere or assumptions that lie behind the actions of some of Spenser's and Shakespeare's characters, emphasizing those instances where not only Jonson but also Lyly and Sidney (the latter receives only one brief mention) provide a suitable contrast or at least illustrate a difference. However, in this book the complex traditions of romance are almost entirely ignored, and instead a whole series of parallels between Shakespeare's middle and late plays and *The Fairie Queene* are elaborated, a few successfully, most of them unconvincingly. The book is an example of a tendency to squeeze all the juice out of the lemons of evidence without first ascertaining that the lemons are all good. The anxiety to prove significant parallels leads to some very unhappy acrobatics. If Britomart's conduct reveals some analogies to Helena's in *All's Well*, we might accept an argument for Spenser's influence; but if Liagore and Florimell from the same book sometimes fit Helena better, where do we stand? Glauce, Britomart's foster-mother, is said to be like the Countess of Rousillon; but sometimes her rôle is paralleled better by Lafeu. Such lines of argument may prove too much for readers trained in logic. And phrases such as "his ghosts seem always to obey the Ultimately Responsible Deed Doer" (p. 1) echo too strongly the language of comic-strips.

A profoundly sobering effect is experienced in turning from these books to the first two of Professor Geoffrey Bullough's five volumes of *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*—(I: *Early Comedies, Poems, Romeo and Juliet* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; New York: Columbia University Press [Toronto: British Book Service (Canada) Ltd.], 1957, pp. xx, 532, $8.75); II: *The Comedies, 1597–1603* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul; New York: Columbia University Press [Toronto: British Book Service (Canada) Ltd.], 1958, pp. xiv, 543, $9.00). We have moved from hypothetical influences to established sources and analogues. If we know Shakespeare's sources, we know the form of narrative or dramatic stories Shakespeare started with when writing his plays and can trace in detail how Shakespeare transformed them into high dramatic art, often even discovering what gave rise to some of his most brilliant thoughts or lines. There is little doubt that for many years to come this beautifully printed collection and study will have an important place in the library of every serious Shakespearean scholar. It replaces J. P. Collier and W. C. Hazlitt's *Shakespeare's Library*, a work hard to come by and very much out of date. It is the fruit of thorough and careful scholarship—the author's humility in the general introduction will put lesser scholars to shame. The only statement in it with which I should quarrel is that the book is designed for general readers rather than scholars. This book is admirably adequate for all but extreme specialists. Sources and analogues have been generously and judi-

ciously chosen. Often they are reprinted in full, sometimes in a new translation, but naturally others had to be represented by significant extracts. While some scholars may be disappointed in one or other instance that more of a certain source was not provided—the sources of *Love's Labour's Lost* are a case in point—to dwell on such matters in this review would be both tedious and unwarranted. I look forward to the longer critical treatment promised in the final volume. There, among other things, we can expect some discussion of Kenneth Muir's views on multiple sources for Shakespearean drama, set forth in his recent book on *Shakespeare's Sources*, I: *Comedies and Tragedies* (London, 1957). While the two works will naturally overlap at some points, their authors evidently reached a gentlemanly working arrangement, in the not unreasonable hope that they can be used as mutual supplements, Muir's providing more extensive criticism, with his own special thesis, Bullough's the texts themselves, with a shorter critical treatment of different bias.

The eleventh volume of the *Shakespeare Survey*, edited by Allardyce Nicoll (Cambridge: At the University Press [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited], 1958, pp. xii, 223, $5.50), which, as its dust-cover announces, continues the "series of yearly volumes dealing with Shakespearean discovery, history, criticism and production all over the world," lives up to the high standard of the others and includes a very useful index to the earlier volumes. Its surveys of critical studies and editions as well as of productions of Shakespeare during 1956 are both comprehensive and lively. Four of its articles present new discoveries that have a bearing on our knowledge of the Elizabethan and Jacobean stage. There is room for mentioning only one of them, "A Portrait of a Moor" by Bernard Harris, a learned comment on the "Portrait of the Moorish Ambassador to Queen Elizabeth," recently acquired by the Shakespeare Institute and well reproduced in this book. The ambassador's garb and face make up a complex pattern of white and black, which may well have been Othello's in the original production. But nearly half the volume is devoted, as customarily, to a specific area of Shakespeare studies, this time the romances or last plays. Six able essays by Leech, Coghill, Brockbank, Muir, Nosworthy, and Sisson throw new light on various aspects of these plays. They are preceded by a critical survey by Philip Edwards of the history of criticism of these plays since 1900. To examine in eighteen pages the major interpretations of *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, *The Tempest*, and *Henry VIII* during the past fifty to sixty years was no mean task, and it has been very ably performed. Edwards shows how in studying these plays scholars have moved since the turn of the century from the vaguely biographical approach of Dowden, Luce, and Raleigh, through Strachey's rebellion against these critics and the plays themselves, to a multitude of modern approaches which fall into at least three distinct categories: the view that the peculiar features of Shakespeare's last plays were in large measure conditioned by such outside influences as the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, the Blackfriars Theatre, or, more vaguely, the changing taste of the time; the interpretation of them in terms of myth, symbol, and allegory; and the more recent emphasis on their romance form. Though an

oversimplification, it is just to say that on the whole Edwards voices his preference for the last, and his dislike for the second of these "schools" of criticism. The dangers of the anthropological or allegorical interpretations will of course reveal themselves blatantly if, like Edwards, one reads ten or twelve of them, by Still, Wilson Knight, Tinckler, Bethell, D. G. James, Frye, Traversi, myself, and others in succession. They will then show up their rigidity and excesses, their inattention to the purely dramatic features of these plays, and their frequent tendency to make the plays seem trite and pallid, contrary to the aim of such criticism. Yet the matter should not be left there. In his outright rejection of this type of criticism, Edwards is guilty of an at least partial contradiction: on the one hand he admits that in characterization and other features, several if not all of the last plays are much simpler and less dramatic than the tragedies; and on the other he accuses the allegorical critics of "the reduction of the complexity of Shakespeare to a striving towards a balanced view of life." He fails to give them credit for having tried to explain that the very spectacular quality of these plays and indeed their whole form are the theatrical medium through which Shakespeare expresses his final view of life, a view at once complex and simple. An examination of these plays in terms of their romance form will not illuminate them unless we realize that Shakespeare's romances are significantly unlike almost any others written in his day. Approaches to these plays through their symbolism and form can therefore act as mutual correctives.

There is room for only very brief comments on three of the other essays. Clifford Leech's "The Structure of the Last Plays" shows an approach diametrically opposed to Heuser's book discussed above. Leech's is saner. Coghill's "Six Points of Stage Craft in *The Winter's Tale*" propounds some original ideas based on his experience of a production by the O.U.D.S. I agree with him that Father Time is a central figure in the play, but the suggestion of introducing him several times before his speech in Act IV is surely dangerous, as was demonstrated by last year's production at Stratford, Ontario, where the audience became irritated by Time. Coghill also provides some evidence for the view that Leontes' jealousy, far from arising suddenly, developed months before the beginning of the play, when it was inflamed by Hermione's pregnancy and friendliness towards Polixenes. He thus wants a growling Leontes from the start. We must all keep an open mind to different interpretations of this perplexing episode at the play's beginning; yet I strongly disagree with this one. The sudden jealousy of Leontes is only one of the surprises Shakespeare has in store for the audience of *The Winter's Tale*. It fits the play's extremely romantic character. It comes upon Leontes like a fever—and such happenings are quite familiar to modern psychiatrists, so why not to Shakespeare? Lastly, Kenneth Muir discusses all the evidence previously advanced for assigning several scenes of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* to Shakespeare, adds some evidence of his own by applying the test of Armstrong's image-clusters—convincingly, I think—and makes a plea for at last including this play in the Shakespeare canon, where it deserves a place as much as do *Henry VI*, part I, and *Pericles*.

Of the purely critical studies of Shakespeare reviewed in this article, G. Wilson Knight's *The Sovereign Flower: On Shakespeare as the Poet of Royalism together with Related Essays and Indexes to Earlier Volumes* (indexes composed by Patricia M. Ball; London: Methuen & Co. Ltd. [Toronto: The Ryerson Press], 1958, pp. 324, $6.00) is unquestionably the most important. The Preface announces that this is Professor Knight's last major Shakespearean study, and I was somewhat startled to find the author describe various arrangements he has made with his manuscripts so that his intentions will be obeyed after his death.

Early in his career, Knight reminded us of a truth now widely accepted and applied: that Shakespeare's work, from *Julius Caesar* on at any rate, should be interpreted as a unity in which each play can help illuminate the others. It seems fitting, therefore, that this last book should include a revision of the earlier essay on "The Shakespearian Integrity," which constitutes his "only comprehensive statement on Shakespeare." The other three major essays deal with Shakespeare's kings, with *All's Well*, and with Shakespeare's proper names in the plays. The last of these, and the slightest, is both entertaining and thought-provoking. Knight demonstrates, with a critical flexibility and breadth not always found in his work, that the names of most of Shakespeare's characters are carefully chosen, whether taken over from the sources or not. Many names comment obliquely, and sometimes ambiguously, on the characters themselves—for example, Bassanio, Lucio, and Falstaff. Shakespeare's great theme of royalism, always one of Knight's favourites, is developed broadly and persuasively in the opening essay.

The major essay deals with *All's Well*. While it does not claim to solve all of the play's problems, it is full of stimulating ideas expressed in a style more lucid than that of some of Knight's earlier essays. Knight links *All's Well* on the one hand to the sonnets and on the other (and more effectively) to the late romances, which are foreshadowed in this play at many points. He rightly emphasizes both the ordinariness and the exceptional, indeed religious, purity and courage of Helena. She heals a king; she heals, that is, the head and symbol of society. Bertram's virtues are the soldierly ones of the Renaissance, and he makes the extreme mistake of recognizing Helena's ordinariness alone. The play shows how Helena and others teach him better. She puts "male confusions in order." The play therefore suggests a view of society "where the female virtues will be in the ascendant," suggests such a view more strongly than the other comedies. But virtues they can be only because of Helena's trust in her ancestral tradition, a trust echoed by the senior figures in the play, but not by Bertram when he parts with his ring. It is impossible to indicate here the wealth of illuminating detail which makes this essay a great work of criticism. If we do not always agree with Knight, if we do not always accept his explanations for the amazing variety in verse and prose in this play, we gladly forgive him his sometimes uncritical enthusiasm.

This article can end lightly with a comment on Frank W. Wadsworth's wry and delightful *The Poacher from Stratford: A Partial Account of the*

Controversy over the Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958, pp. xiv, 174, $4.50). Every teacher of Shakespeare who is plagued by Baconians, Oxfordians, Pembrokians, Rutlandians, Marlovians, and the like will owe this writer a deep gratitude. Mr. Wadsworth has read all their heresies and summarizes them neatly. But his book is written in such an "objective" spirit that only gradually, as theory upon theory is piled up and contrasted, does the restrained humour of the whole dawn upon its reader. From then on, the work becomes more and more hilarious. Such broader comments as "Certain orthodox scholars have objected that Allen's scientific historical criticism is more in the tradition of Duns Scotus than of E. K. Chambers," or "The Earl's [Earl of Oxford's] claims were worked out in detail by a Gateshead School Master, J. Thomas Looney (not to be confused with the Baconian, George M. Battey)"—such comments are carefully rationed but convey an idea of the book's spirit. Its few pictures include a full-page reproduction of "Calvin Hoffman peering into the empty tomb of Sir Thomas Walsingham," a sad but immaculate face, and altogether unforgettable.

F. D. HOENIGER

REVIEWS

Marcel Proust

The latest biography of Proust in English, *Marcel Proust: A Biography* by Richard H. Barker (New York: Criterion Books [Toronto: S. J. Reginald Saunders and Company Limited], pp. x, 373, $7.75), is an intensely personal portrait, indeed a sort of "Proust par lui-même," since it relies mostly on quotations from the letters with related excerpts from the novels *Jean Santeuil* and *A la recherche du temps perdu*. The result is an almost depressing study in which the figure of Proust alone is clear-cut and detailed. It is depressing because a writer is never his own best critic and Proust the man was a singularly neurotic individual. The letters emphasize this side of his character to the detriment of his very great skill as a novelist, and our appreciation and understanding of the novels are scarcely enhanced by such a dismal portrait of their author.

Richard Barker's biography seems directed mainly towards English-speaking students of Proust well acquainted with the Scott Moncrieff translation of *A la recherche du temps perdu*. It is assumed that readers know details of the story and the characters quite intimately (cf. the references to Andrée, Saniette), but all quotations from Proust are in translation (including excerpts from the letters) except for a single curious exception, a double quotation from the *pastiches* of the Lemoine case (p. 167). Scholarly paraphernalia have purposely been eliminated even to the extent of excluding exact references for quotations from *Jean Santeuil*, *Remembrance of Things Past*, and the letters. In the whole book there are just a dozen very modest footnotes. The result is a readable narrative which will not however always satisfy a student who wants to chase up sources.

There really is no startling new material in this biography even though the author has gone to great pains accurately filling in the background from contemporary newspaper accounts, letters to and from Proust, and any other material he could lay his hands on. The range of material covered is vast, and the merit of the study lies in the subordination of detail to the main line of evolution in Proust's life and work and the clarification of chronology. There is a very helpful chronological table at the end of the book along with an Index which is particularly useful in the details it gives under Proust's life.

There is, of course, a certain monotony in Proust's existence—his illness

and its treatment, his society outings, his parties for aristocratic friends. Proust seems old right from the start and one reads the biography without any real sense of the passage of time except for the war years. In certain early chapters one assumes that Proust must be getting on in years and then, on stopping to calculate his age, discovers with surprise that he is still in his early thirties! This impression of disembodiment is exaggerated since the other individuals in Proust's life are treated marginally. Their names are mentioned frequently, but they are often just addresses on letters or a list of guests at a reception, with the possible exception of Madame Straus, who seems more real.

It is, to be sure, impossible to separate completely Proust's life and his work, and critics will never have done seeking the models Proust used in his delineation of characters, locales, and even the music and paintings described and the various theories advanced. Dr. Barker mentions the usually accepted character keys and, in selecting information for the biography, tends to choose incidents which are closely related to incidents in the novels. In describing Proust's trip to Belgium and Holland with Bertrand de Salignac-Fénelon in 1902, for instance, he mentions only Vermeer's "View of Delft," which Proust saw at The Hague (p. 116), a painting which was to play an important rôle in the death of Bergotte (p. 335).

Dr. Barker assesses the different sections of Proust's production—the articles contributed to the early reviews, *Les Plaisirs et les jours*, the newspaper articles (*Les Chroniques*), the *Pastiches et mélanges*, and, in addition to *A la recherche du temps perdu*, the recently discovered early works—the novel *Jean Santeuil* (translated into English by Gerard Hopkins) and *Contre Sainte-Beuve* (translated into English by Sylvia Townsend Warner).

It is paradoxical that some of the most luminous pages in the biography are those where Dr. Barker analyses the early parts of *A la recherche du temps perdu*. There is a certain repetitiousness in the analysis of later volumes where, in particular, we are also presented with certain theories which are at variance with views widely accepted among critics of Proust.

For example, in talking about inversion in *Sodome et Gomorrhe*, Dr. Barker expresses bewilderment that Proust should apparently view Lesbianism with horror when he has given "on the whole a sympathetic account of homosexuality." He acknowledges that Proust's chauffeur, Alfred Agostinelli, was by a sort of transposition of the sexes the principal model for the narrator's friend Albertine but he then questions (p. 300) why Proust should be shocked by Albertine's interest in other women. "Can it be that Proust is actually of two minds about inversion and that he sometimes feels obliged to condemn what at other times he excuses? Or can it be that he is really thinking of a specific vice that is recognized as such by both homosexual and heterosexual lovers—the union of masculine women and effeminate men?"

Actually, a much more logical suggestion was made ten years ago by Justin O'Brien in a definitive article in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association* ("Albertine the Ambiguous: Notes on Proust's Transposition of Sexes," *PMLA*, LXIV (1949), 933–52). In discussing this very question, Professor O'Brien says (p. 945): "It must be concluded, then, that

in endowing Albertine with Lesbian tendencies Proust was acting quite intentionally and logically. In other words, if Albertine had been named Albert and Marcel had been homosexual, Marcel would have suffered intensely from Albert's relations with women. In order for the *travesti* or transposition of sexes to be consistent, Albertine *had* to be bisexual."

There are some other points of criticism where one would disagree with Dr. Barker. He certainly underestimates the theory of involuntary memory and *Le Temps retrouvé*. He relies too heavily on one specialized study of Proust—Albert Feuillerat's *Comment Marcel Proust a composé son roman*—which he describes as "the most valuable single book on the novel" (p. 356). He tends to disparage the intellectual and philosophical side of the novel. In his analysis of Proust's ideas on the creative side of art, he deals with Bergotte and Elstir but completely omits La Berma even though he twice mentions Sarah Bernhardt who was in part the model for the character.

When all is said and done, however, the final impression left by this new biography is that of a well-written and reliable though one-sided account of Proust and his times. Dr. Barker has brought in translation to English readers an interesting selection from the wealth of detail contained in Proust's letters. All this contributes to giving us a very complete portrait of Proust the man. The main criticism of the biography is the one that the author himself makes (p. 176) in summarizing Proust's views in *Contre Sainte-Beuve*: "The trouble with Sainte-Beuve was that, despite his reputation as a critic, he failed to distinguish between the two selves. He dealt with the man, the self that was not called into play, when he should have been dealing with the man of genius; he relied on his intelligence, which is scarcely serviceable at all in art, when he should have relied on intuitive penetration."

VICTOR E. GRAHAM

Smollett's Hoax?

Carmine Rocco Linsalata's *Smollett's Hoax: Don Quixote in English* (Stanford University Press, 1956, pp. 116, $2.75) is a curious work, in which 86 pages of textual comparisons in 6 appendixes accompany 23 pages of text. The main argument, based entirely on internal evidence, disregards (in fact does not even mention) the only external evidence we have: the relevant passages in Smollett's correspondence. Professor Linsalata proves with a great luxury of examples that Smollett copied an earlier translation by Jarvis (1742). Then he goes on: not only did Smollett copy Jarvis' errors, he made many of his own—witness the fact that he could not even translate numbers correctly. *This proves that he did not know Spanish.* But he was "too astute to be a mere copyist" (p. 13); he used a technique, which "consisted principally of plagiarizing, paraphrasing, rewriting, and inverting

Jarvis' translation" (p. 13); yet "all his astuteness, ingenuity, and personal gift in creative literature were not sufficient to help him sustain his clever mask" (p. 13). He was in a dilemma, and so he "assigned the task of translating the *Quixote* to his hack school, thereby unburdening himself of a rather messy situation" (p. 16). Certain biographers tell us he had a hack school. There *must* have been a hack school: the admixture of copied passages and corrected passages points to the fact that the translation was done by more than one person (p. 17). Furthermore, there is an ambiguous use of a personal pronoun (p. 21) unworthy of a great prose writer. This suggests that Smollett did not even edit the work done by his hirelings. His translation is a hoax.

Obviously, Professor Linsalata rests his entire case on Smollett's supposed lack of Spanish. But how tenuous the thread! He furnishes us with 69 instances of mistranslations of numbers, and his conclusion is that Smollett *cannot* even translate numbers, whereas the only inference possible (in the absence of external evidence) is that Smollett *does not* (for reasons of his own). If Professor Linsalata had been willing to take at their face value Smollett's assertions (cf. Noyes) that he understood Spanish, he might have had no need to bring in the hack school at all. For its existence complicates the argument: since the Smollett translation is a reworking of the Jarvis translation throughout, it follows (*a*) that Smollett told all his hacks to use the Jarvis translation, or else (*b*) that they all spontaneously turned to it themselves, or agreed to do so. It seems to me, however, that the crafty Smollett that Professor Linsalata conjures up, given a partial knowledge of Spanish, and the above-mentioned four-point technique of plagiarizing, paraphrasing, rewriting, and inverting, could easily have managed to do what Professor Linsalata attributes to a group, namely, copy certain passages and correct others, rewrite, invert, condense, and elaborate (p. 19). Certain eighteenth-century French translations of English novels, for example, contain all of these techniques while still being the work of only one man.

Professor Linsalata goes even further than using the word *hoax*. He calls Smollett's translation "a gem in the realm of fraudulent acts." I venture to suggest that he is letting his indignation carry him away. Certainly, publishing a reworking of another's translation under one's own name is reprehensible. Yet a critic must be most circumspect before he can cry fraud, unless he wishes to tar with the same brush some of the fairest names in literature. In this case it is difficult to know on whose hand to apply the ferrule, because even if we see the results of the crime (if crime there be), we do not know who committed it: Professor Linsalata offers no documentary proof; Smollett may or may not have translated the Quixote in whole or in part; he may or may not have edited the work once it was translated. True, by signing the work, he accepted moral responsibility for it. But here again, we must be careful not to judge an eighteenth-century performance according to twentieth-century ethical standards. There is no evidence that anyone—even Smollett's most vituperative critics—cried fraud when the translation was published, although if there was a hack school Grub Street would have known of it.

Even to one as lacking in Spanish as I, Professor Linsalata's copious lists of parallel passages show conclusively that the Smollett translation is a reworking of Jarvis, and owes nothing to French translations of the *Quixote*. This would have been merit enough: the book is in any case impeccably printed, with a very handsome cover. It is a pity therefore, that the question of attribution has not been treated in a more convincing way.

EUGÈNE JOLIAT

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